METRO / A20

Raids on shabu warehouses in Rizal, Manila yield over P400 million worth of drugs

BUSINESS / B1

Gov't revises profit-sharing plan for mining

ACROSS / A17

Bossi kin ask gov't not to use force

WORLD / A21

High-tech industries want more US visas for skilled workers

ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Gawad Kalinga movie makes P200M in the US

Gov't radio reporter shot dead in Tawi-Tawi

By Edwin O. Fernandez
Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—TWO WEEKS AFTER President Macapagal-Arroyo vowed to end the killing of journalists once and for all, assassins struck again and gunned down a radio reporter in Western Mindanao.

Two gunmen yesterday shot dead Vicente

GOV'T RADIO/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, June 26, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 198 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Cell phones more precious than wedding rings–Nokia

By Jocelyn R. Uy

SINGAPORE—HERE'S A little known fact among cell phone users: One of every five would rather lose his or her wallet, credit cards or wedding ring than his or her unit.

CELL PHONES/ A15

DITO NGA MAY UPUAN ANG MGA CELL PHONE NATIN

Bedol challenges Comelec: Sue me

Maguindanao poll official denies losing CoCs

COMBATIVE MODE. Controversial election official Lintang H. Bedol answers questions during an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER and GMA 7 at his house in Cotabato City on Monday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

By Nikko Dizon

COTABATO CITY—HE MAY BE ARMED TO THE teeth but Lintang Bedol, the man at the center of a vote fraud scandal in Maguindanao, would rather face his accusers in court.

Insisting on his innocence, the provincial election supervisor of Maguindanao yesterday challenged his detractors—and the Commission on Elections (Comelec) as well—to file charges against him.

"Those who are saying that there was cheating in Maguindanao, file a case against me tomorrow, the next day. They should file a case now and I will answer their accusations," Bedol said nonchalantly in Filipino.

Bedol even welcomed a threat the Comelec could charge him with infidelity in the custody of documents after he reported that the first copies of the municipal certificates of canvass (CoCs), or vote tallies, were stolen from his office at the heavily guarded provincial capitol in Sharif Aguak on May 29.

"That's OK if the Comelec would file charges against me. The accused should be the custodian of these documents. And that wasn't me," Bedol said. "It's up to them (Comelec) to discover who that person was."

Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer said in Manila that Task Force Maguindanao, which looked into the allegations of poll irregularities in the province, had recommended the sacking of Bedol from his post as provincial election officer. *(See related story on this page).*

A shiny silver pistol gleamed on Bedol's waistband as he spoke during an interview on Sunday night on the eve of the crucial retabulation of Maguindanao votes that could decide who between Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III of the Genuine Opposition

BEDOL/ A6

Quake rocks special count; Zubiri ahead

By Nikko Dizon and Jerome Aning

SHARIF AGUAK, MAGUINDANAO—SWEEPING aside opposition protests and demands that the proceedings be declared illegal, a special provincial board of canvassers yesterday began tabulating votes in the scandal-ridden Maguindanao elections that could decide who would win the 12th and last Senate slot.

By the time the proceedings adjourned at 5:30 p.m.—after a mild earthquake hit the town at around noon—the special board had only canvassed the senatorial and party-list results from the municipal certificates of canvass (CoCs) of South Upi, Shariff Aguak and Buluan.

Results from the 3 provinces tabulated by the board showed Team Unity (TU) candidate Juan Miguel Zubiri with 45,021 votes and his rival, Genuine Opposition (GO) candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, with 18,035 votes.

QUAKE/ A6

More jobs today in Subic and Clark

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK FREEPORT ZONE—TWO of the most strategic defense posts of the United States, which the Philippine government turned into economic zones beginning in 1992, are now among the country's biggest job centers, doubling or tripling the employment levels during the heyday of the American bases.

The former Clark Air Base in Pampanga and Subic Naval Base in Zambales—now the Clark Freeport and Subic Bay Freeport, respectively—employ a total of 117,723 workers.

Clark had 50,184 workers last month, according to records of Clark Development Corp. (CDC). Subic had 67,539 workers as of April, according to Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

The number of jobs at Clark is more than double the 22,000 workers hired by the 13th Air Force up until the pullout of US troops in 1991, according to CDC president Levy Laus.

Over at Subic, the employment figure is more than thrice the 20,000 workers there until the Seventh Fleet withdrew in 1992,

MORE/ A8

IN THE KNOW

Gov't warned people of economic fallout, security threats

AS THE TERMINATION OF THE RP-US Military Bases Agreement on Sept. 16, 1991, neared, top government officials tried to persuade the senators to accept the new treaty that would allow the United States to keep Subic Naval Base in Zambales for 10 more years in exchange for $360 million in aid for the first year and $203 million annually for the next nine years.

Then President Corazon Aquino said the Philippines needed the financial aid in light of the economic crisis caused by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in June 1991. She also warned that rejection of the treaty might result in an increase in taxes, as the government would need to cope with the expected cut in foreign funds.

Richard Gordon, then mayor of Olongapo, the city frequented by US servicemen based in Subic, argued that if the base was shut

GOV'T/ A8

3 generals urged to come out in the open

By Christine O. Avendaño and Christian V. Esguerra

THE MILITARY YESTERDAY challenged three generals to come out in the open with their accusations linking some top officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to political killings.

"If there is anyone who has something against any of our officers and men, let him file his case in the proper court and not in the court of public opinion," the Philippine Army said in a statement.

In separate interviews, three AFP generals had told the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity about a 2005 military conference that discussed the Armed Forces' course of action against suspected communist insurgents.

The third general, who said he was present at the meeting, had said Friday that two other generals had led the discussion on the killing of political activists in the presence of at least 100 soldiers, including the support staff of each division and battalion.

3 GENERALS/ A15

GLORIA IN SINGAPORE
President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, with Singapore President S.R. Nathan walking behind her, is given military honors during the welcome ceremony at the Istana, the presidential palace, in Singapore on Monday. Ms Arroyo, who is in the city-state on a state visit, delivered the opening address at the 2007 World Economic Forum on East Asia on Sunday.

JERRY CARUAL/PCPO

NBI sees foul play in loss of 'broadband network' papers

By Michael Lim Ubac and Tina G. Santos

THERE IS MORE TO THE LOSS OF "voluminous" documents on the $329.5-million deal between the Arroyo administration and China to set up a broadband network for all Philippine government offices than meets the eye, according to the National Bureau of Investigation.

The NBI has found foul play and conspiracy involving the Philippines' commercial attaché and his subordinate who were entrusted with the original copy of the memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo during her visit to Hainan province in China on April 21.

NBI Director Nestor Mantaring confirmed reports that the missing documents were "stolen" and not "accidentally lost" as claimed by Emmanuel Nino Wee Ang, commercial attaché of the Philippine Consulate in Guangzhou, Guangdong, and Allan Liu, a Chinese national whose real name is Liu Zhen Qiang and who works as trade assistant and interpreter.

The deal involves primarily the supply of equipment and services for the national broadband network (a high-speed Internet system) between the Arroyo administration, through the Department of Transportation and Communications, and ZTE Corp., a Chinese company which won the project of the DOTC and the Commission on Information and Communica-

NBI/ A8

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly clourainshowers.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Palace: Up to House to probe CA

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Dona Pazzibugan

MALACAÑANG DOESN'T WANT TO GET INvolved in the investigation of the reported extortion racket of some members of the powerful Commission on Appointments (CA).

"I don't think the President needs to be dragged into this," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters yesterday.

He said the House of Representatives, through its ethics committee, should be the one to look into the charges hurled by outgoing Rep. Herminio Teves that a CA cabal he called the "Big Five" extorted up to P5 million from government officials who wanted their appointments cleared.

But administration-allied Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who revealed that she herself had once been victimized by CA members, doubted any investigation into the alleged CA extortion activity would make any headway.

She said Malacañang appointees who fell victim to the extortion would be reluctant to speak out.

"Generally, no nominee will incriminate himself by testifying that he obtained confirmation by giving a bribe, an appointment or a contract to a CA member," said Santiago, chair of the committee on foreign relations of the Commission on Appointments.

"Further(more), it would be the nominee's word against that of the solons and therefore all things being equal, the presumption of innocence will be sustained," she added.

Santiago said she was harassed by CA members when she was up for confirmation as immigration commissioner during the Aquino administration.

She said she was repeatedly bypassed because she refused to accommodate the "illegal requests" of some CA members.

"I was bullied and tormented during the sessions and all the corrupt employees in the immigration bureau had a field day slinging mud at me, with the malicious encouragement of the arrogant senators and congressmen who wanted to take me down a peg or two ... It was a brutal process," she said.

Santiago suggested instead that the bicameral body revoke the controversial provision that grants veto power to each member of the CA.

Under Section 20 of the CA rules, any member can overrule the rest of the commission and move to suspend the confirmation of any Malacañang appointee. This veto power cannot be debated so that by a mere motion of one CA member, a nominee is automatically bypassed.

"This one-person veto is what empowers a CA member to extort bribes, government appointments or public works contracts in exchange for confirmation," said Santiago.

She also suggested that the CA strictly enforce no unofficial communication between a CA member and a nominee during the confirmation process.

"The CA by itself can repeal Section 20 and can also make it illegal for a CA member and a nominee to communicate directly or indirectly outside of the public committee hearings. That way, the opportunities for extortion would be minimized," she said.

Opposition Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson's suggestions were similar to those made by Santiago.

He said that during his stint as a CA member, the body amended its rules to bar any member from invoking Section 20 (veto power). But Lacson said there were still a lot of "gray areas" that needed to be clarified to prevent extortion and bribery.

Meanwhile, Bunye said President Arroyo had directed nominated Cabinet secretaries to submit their papers to the CA as soon as possible.

Bunye, volunteering his own experience, said he had not been asked by any CA member for any consideration.

Bunye, confirmed by the CA after just one hearing, was one of the lucky Cabinet members who passed the CA wringer. *With a report from Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

Read her lips: No new taxes

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY REITerated President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent pronouncement that she would not impose new taxes during the remainder of her term.

"The President said no new taxes. It's very clear that we could do with whatever taxes we have. It's a matter of implementing a combination of measures, both the tax measures and the non-tax measures for us to be able to hit our deficit targets," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye at a press conference.

The directive covers the unpopular proposal to slap a tax on text messages.

"That is covered by what the President said. So the general opposition to a tax on text was taken into consideration. But right now we're not considering any other tax, not even a tax on text," Bunye said.

He said Ms Arroyo's pronouncement, made last week in the presence of economic managers, should be a clear signal to the administration-dominated House of Representatives, where tax measures emanate.

Bunye said the President "very clearly said that the tax reform measures that we've passed would suffice for the time being" in meeting the deficit target for this year, which is P63 billion.

The national government has made a commitment to balance its budget—which has been in a deficit since the Asian currency crisis of 1997—by 2008.

Last year, the government raised the value-added tax (VAT) rate to 12 percent from 10 percent and removed certain exemptions to stabilize its finances.

It is also seeking to rationalize fiscal incentives because the current system causes a heavy drain on revenue collections.

Confident of hitting target

"(W)e're confident that we will meet the deficit target with a combination of tax measures—the ones that we have already passed and the enhancement measures, meaning, for example, the acceleration of privatization," said Bunye.

A number of government corporations are set to be privatized within the year.

The finance department said the government would generate P1 billion in additional taxes annually by imposing the expanded value-added tax on toll revenue from the North Luzon and South Luzon expressways.

Rationalization

Bunye said Malacañang would also pursue the rationalization of certain incentives enjoyed by officials and employees of certain government departments and agencies.

"Even with the removal of these perks, we should not lose our competitiveness," he said.

Even without new taxes, the economic team could still meet the zero-deficit target in 2008, Bunye said.

The rationalization of fiscal incentives, which has been proposed as early as 1994, entails the lifting of redundant tax-and duty-free privileges granted to businesses.

On May 7, the finance department pushed for the passage in Congress of three more tax bills, which are expected to bring in an additional P10 billion in revenues a year. *With a report from Michelle V. Remo*

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GMA: RP a First World nation in 20 years

By Daxim L. Lucas

SINGAPORE—THE PHILIPPINES IS SET to become a fully developed nation—economically and politically—in two decades or less given the dedication of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo to its reform program.

The President set out this ambitious target yesterday, as she invited Singaporean businessmen, as well as Filipino businessmen based in the island-state, to invest in the Philippines' growth story.

"We would like to be like Singapore someday, maybe in 20 years—a First World country," Ms Arroyo said in her speech delivered at the Fullerton Hotel before the Philippine-Singapore Business Council.

More importantly, the President vowed to replicate the Singaporean government's global reputation of being one of the least corrupt in the world, and use this to attract more investment.

"There is something else that Singapore is famous for, and that is its high standard of transparency in government," she said. "This is another thing we want to emulate."

The President's pitch was geared toward assuaging the chronic concerns of foreign businessmen about the opaque practices of Philippine government institutions, especially those involved in large infrastructure projects.

At the same time, Ms Arroyo tried to convince the businessmen that her administration had achieved significant progress that had not been publicized in the media.

She pointed to the government's anticorruption adviser, Tony Kwok—the former anticorruption czar in Hong Kong—who she said "believes that perceptions cloud the reality" of the progress in the Philippines in the fight for better governance.

"The fact is that we have undertaken a strong and steady effort to curb graft and corruption through criminal justice, administrative controls and procedural reform," she said.

Special attention is being given to the revenue agencies like the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs (BoC) from which the government sources the bulk of its income. Both agencies are routinely cited for corruption and inefficiency by advocacy groups and in public surveys.

President Arroyo tried to reassure the Singaporean businessmen of a friendly operating environment should they decide to invest more in the country.

"[Our] effort is focused on the revenue agencies that have improved their performance in recent years, agencies that are [on] the frontline of day-to-day public services, and local governments," she said.

"We take this issue seriously."

DENR all for construction of spa on Taal volcano

By Volt Contreras

THERE APPEARS TO BE NO STOPPING THE construction of a P72-million health spa along Taal volcano's crater, amid simmering questions over its legality, safety and the signal it would send to businessmen interested in putting up businesses in "protected areas" in the country.

Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes said Taal's status as a protected area "does not prohibit its use for ecotourism" and that the town mayor who "strongly endorsed" the Korean venture had assured him the spa would not have "permanent structures."

Only "lightweight, wooden" materials would be used, Reyes said, quoting a communication he had with Talisay, Batangas, Mayor Florencio Manimtim Jr. whose town will host the spa to be built on Volcano Island.

Reyes clarified reports over the weekend that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources would review its issuance of an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for the project in November 2006.

He said a team which would include civil society representatives would be formed to monitor "compliance" with the conditions set in the ECC to keep the project's construction and operation environmentally sound.

Investors invited

"People want me to close the company. I just can't do that," he said at a press conference, noting that the project had been endorsed by the mayors of the 13 towns surrounding Taal Lake.

He noted that foreign investors were "invited" to the area particularly by Manimtim.

The mayor, Reyes said, had rued the fact that while most of Taal Lake was under Talisay's jurisdiction, most of Taal's tourism income went to the more developed Tagaytay City.

"We have to respect the point of view of the LGU's and their people. Perhaps they know the situation better than us," he said. "The least we can do is send a team there to ensure compliance."

As to why the DENR granted an ECC to the project in the first place, DENR Region IV-A Director Roberto Sheen explained that it met "all the protocols required" and got "prior clearance" from the surrounding local governments.

A review committee that went over the proposal also "endorsed" the project, said Sheen, who sat together with Reyes at the press conference.

Sheen wouldn't give a direct answer, though, when asked if the review committee he had mentioned had categorically declared the project as being safe for such a location.

Residents protest

The DENR officials met with reporters two days after local residents, fishermen and farmers residing around the volcano had protested the project, saying it threatened to evict them from their homes and ruin their livelihood.

At the center of the brewing controversy is the Taal Island Resort Spa to be built and operated by Korean firm Jung Ang Interventure Corp. Headed by its president Kim Yoon Joung, the company holds office at the Medical Plaza building, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City.

Reyes said the project, which would also involve the construction of viewing decks, an "elevator," a museum and access routes for the public, will cover about six hectares out of Taal's protected area of 60,000 hectares.

As per information he got from Manimtim, Reyes said the Korean firm "bought (the six hectares) from a family that had titles" to the land.

The residents' protest was backed by the leftist groups Pamalakaya and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

Taal, one of the more scenic but active volcanoes in the country, was declared a protected area in 1996 through Presidential Proclamation No. 906.

'Enough,' gov't lawyers say of Erap request

GOVERNMENT LAWYERS YESTERDAY opposed ousted President Joseph Estrada's motion asking the Sandiganbayan Special Division to allow him to attend the oath-taking of Manila Mayor-elect Alfredo Lim on June 30.

The prosecution in the six-year-old plunder case argued that Estrada's presence at the June 30 rites at the Liwasang Bonifacio may only fan division among the residents of Manila.

Estrada had endorsed Lim against incumbent Lito Atienza, an administration stalwart.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio and Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos said Estrada had been allowed out of his detention estate in Tanay too many times. Public funds were used and police were mobilized every time he was allowed out on pass, they added.

"He has practically abused the leniency and magnanimity of the government by asking for approbation of requests to attend gatherings or social events which other detention prisoners could not avail of," stated the prosecution.

The prosecution said "enough is enough" when it came to political rallies.

The antigraft court allowed Estrada to attend the centennial celebration of San Juan on March 27 to receive an award. He was also permitted to visit with his mother, Mary Ejercito, on her 102nd birthday in May.

Two weeks ago, he was also allowed to attend the wedding of his son, San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito.

Jocelyn R. Uy

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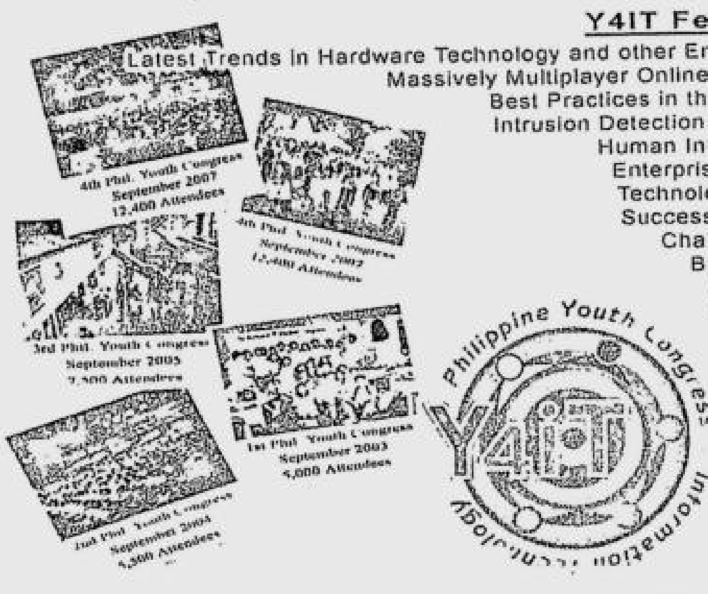
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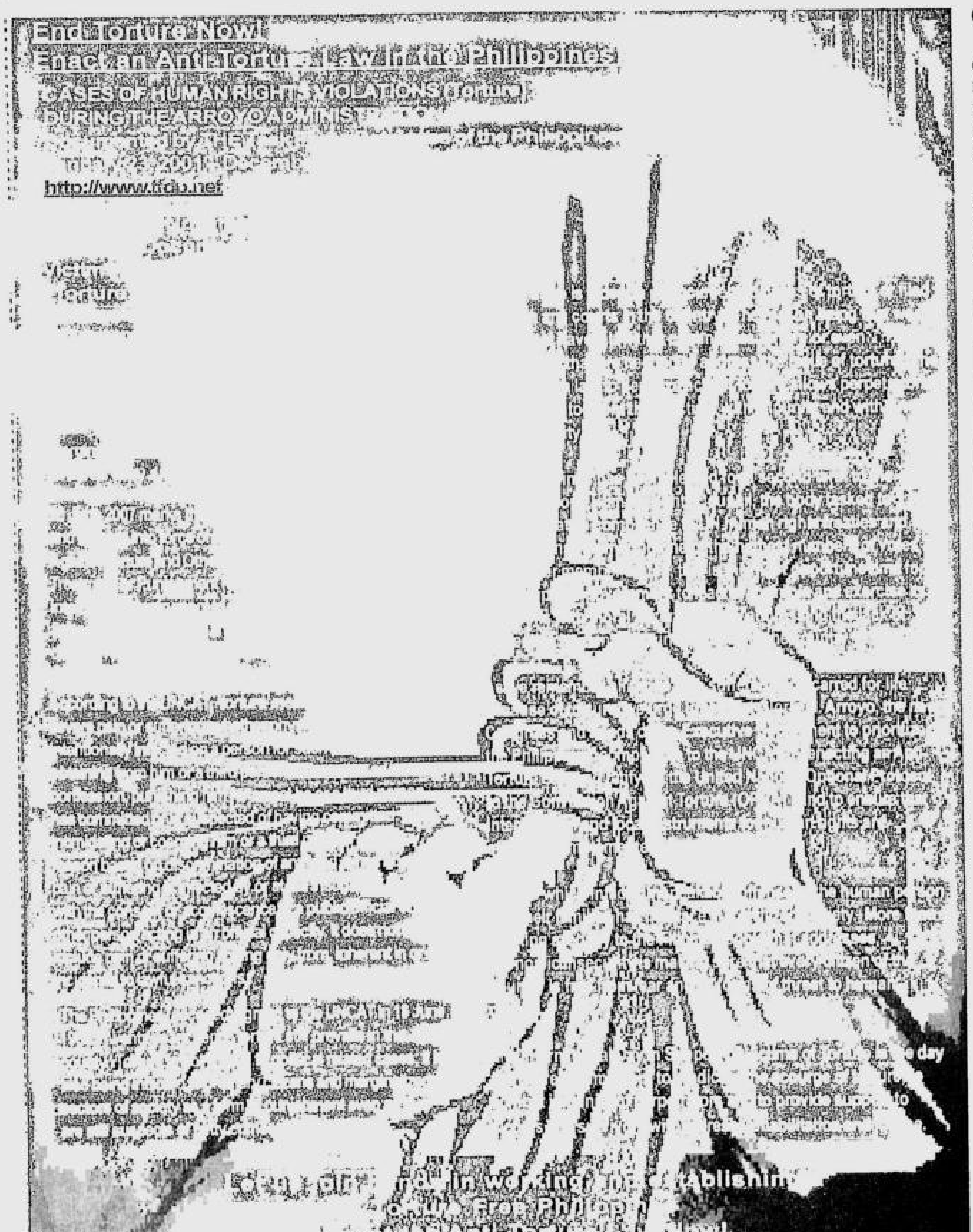
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Justice lawyers miffed Honasan was cleared

By Leila B. Salaverria

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PROSEcutors said yesterday they disagreed with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's decision clearing Senator-elect Gregorio Honasan of coup d'etat charges in connection with the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Fadullon, who headed the five-member panel handling the case, said Honasan should have been charged, although he acknowledged that it was within Gonzalez's power to reverse their findings.

"We were caught by surprise in the sense that we did not expect it to come out that soon. Second, we were caught by surprise with the outcome...because it was far, it was too far off from the recommendation," Fadullon said. He added that he thought the resolution would have been modified but not reversed.

In its resolution issued in April, the panel had said the evidence and testimonies against Honasan showed that he had participated in planning the Oakwood hotel takeover and was the "driving force" behind the recruitment and organization of junior military officers to overthrow the government through force and violence.

But acting on Honasan's appeal, Gonzalez last week ordered prosecutors to withdraw the charges against the rebel officer-turned-senator, saying Honasan may have been the inspiration behind the Oakwood takeover but there was no evidence to pin him down in the siege.

Gonzalez's decision had come several weeks after Honasan, released on bail by a Makati court, met with President Macapagal-Arroyo. Malacañang denied they had cut a deal.

Criminal liability

Disappointed, Fadullon said the panel believed Honasan had a criminal liability.

"I would maintain our earlier finding that Mr. Honasan was a leader of the coup. If we were to be asked to resolve it again, that would still be our finding. But again, like I said, it's already moot and academic with the findings of the secretary so I don't think I should say anything more," he said.

He said the prosecution's theory was that the Oakwood siege was planned months in advance and was not a spontaneous event.

The disgruntled young officers who took over the posh Makati hotel in July 2003 denounced the President and the military brass for corruption and mishandling the war in Mindanao, among other things, before giving up 18 hours later.

Fadullon said Gonzalez did not speak to him before clearing Honasan, but met with him afterward. He declined to disclose what they talked about.

Asked if the panel was thinking of resigning following the reversal of its recommendation, Fadullon said it had not reached a decision.

Aside from Fadullon, the other members of the panel were State Prosecutors Juan Pedro Navera, Rosanne Balauag and Irwin Maraya, and Prosecuting Attorney Amanda Felipe.

Undecided on resigning

"We are not yet decided on that so we cannot let our personal stand on the issue get the better of us. We are going to meet because with or without Senator Honasan, there is still a case to prosecute," Fadullon said.

The other accused in the coup d'etat case should not see the dismissal of Honasan's case as a weakening of the prosecution's case against them, according to Fadullon.

He said the other accused, like Antonio Trillanes IV—another newly elected senator—were directly involved in the siege of the Oakwood hotel.

De Venecia using House website in leadership fight, solon charges

By Christian V. Esguerra

A LAWMAKER YESterday accused Speaker Jose de Venecia of using the House of Representatives' official website to smear Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, his rival for the speakership in the incoming 14th Congress.

Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis noted that at least two press releases posted on the site (www.congress.gov.ph) "maligned" the 81-year-old Garcia, while a third trumpeted Malacañang's purported support of De Venecia's bid for a record fifth term as speaker.

Solis described De Venecia's "misuse" of the website as "immoral and indefensible as it is tantamount to using government resources for a media campaign in support of (his) personal ambition."

Out of the bag

"The cat is now out of the bag that House resources are being misused by De Venecia," Solis said in a statement.

He cited a June 22 release in which De Venecia's allies in the House described Garcia as "the face of dynasty, not reform." Speaking in behalf of the Speaker was Rep. Mauricio Domogan of Baguio.

The same release quoted Kampi Rep. Junie Cua as advising Garcia: "Withdraw from the speakership race gracefully with the wisdom of a statesman." This was e-mailed to the INQUIRER at least four times since Friday.

Solis said another release described Garcia and his family as a "full-scale dynasty." It was the same statement issued by De Venecia himself when he hit back at Garcia in their word war over the speakership.

A photo release on the same website also did not sit well with Solis.

The photo, which showed at least five congressmen supposedly declaring their support for De Venecia, was credited to the House Public Relations and Information Department.

Solid ground

The caption read: "Speaker Jose de Venecia's bid for a record fifth term as House leader stands on solid ground. A declaration of support for him has been signed by 166 House members, some of whom called on him Saturday at his Makati residence."

In the photo were Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, Rep. Cecille Luna, Rep. Arthur Defensor, Rep. Henry Pryde Teves and Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar also of Cebu.

The De Venecia camp yesterday resent the same release to the INQUIRER titled: "Garcia is the face of dynasty, not reform."

"With all due respect, Garcia does not and will not be the leader and spokesman for reforms in the House," it quoted Domogan as saying.

Five women legislators, meanwhile, said on Monday leadership was the issue in the speakership race, and no one had defined leadership more convincingly than De Venecia who had put his position on the line to get vital legislation passed by the chamber.

Easier road

In a joint statement, the five—Lorna Silverio, Mitos Magsaysay, Girlie Villarosa, Nanette Castelo-Daza and Rep.-elect Rachel Arenas—said: "Speaker De Venecia could have chosen the easier road, which was to be popular. He should be commended for his political courage and political will in the face of criticism."

"Political ambition and family dynasty alone can not propel any politician to the position of Speaker," they said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 26, 2007
12th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 13:2, 5-18
Gospel: Matthew 7:6, 12-14

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs, or throw your pearls to the pigs: they might trample on them and even turn on you and tear you to pieces.

"So, do to others whatever you would that others do to you: there you have the Law and the Prophets.

"Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many go that way. How narrow is the gate that leads to life and how rough the road; few there are who find it."

Commentary

Abram and Lot have acquired too much for the land to be able to sustain both of their clans (early ecology and biodiversity conservation). So they split up and move apart so that they can live in harmony. The Lord promises Abram the land for himself and his descendents. Abram builds an altar to the Lord in the land, mindful of the fact that it is the Lord's and given only as gift.

We continue to listen to Jesus' sermon on very practical matters to be lived daily. We live in a world and even a church where people are disrespectful of our beliefs and practices, our call to be just, to care for the poor, to love our enemies, and to be reconciled. Therefore, we must be wise and not share the depth of our understanding with those who do not appreciate it and mock it. There is violence and we must be aware as we act towards one another that others will not always agree with us or want our care and love. But we are encouraged to go together through the narrow gate. How do we live with each other in the groups that we belong to?

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E. P. Mercado; 59

EDGARDO P. MERCADO OF QUEZON CITY died on June 24 of cancer. He was 59.

He is survived by his wife Evelyn, children Roma and Raizelyn, brothers Efren, Edilberto and Enrique, and sisters Evangeline Rivera and Edna Crisostomo.

His remains lie at Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City. Interment will be on June 27 at Himlayang Pilipino after the 9 a.m. Mass.

Correction

IN THE JUNE 25 issue, a Business story published on Page B-8—"NDA brings in livestock worth P44M from NZ"—misstated the agency that funded the cow importation. The shipment was funded by the US Department of Agriculture under its Food For Progress program, and implemented by Land O'Lakes Phil. in collaboration with the National Dairy Authority. It was not jointly funded by the US Agency for International Development and the National Dairy Quedancor Animal Loan program.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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WHO: RP lucky to be bird flu-free but must prepare

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

HONG KONG—THE Philippines is "lucky" to have remained bird flu-free but this should not be a reason to be complacent.

Saying the risk of an avian flu pandemic remained high, Takeshi Kasai, regional adviser of the World Health Organization Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response, said this should instead be an opportunity for the country to "exercise readiness."

Kasai warned that in case of a pandemic, countries could not expect international aid because their neighbors would be busy attending to their own problems.

Waning interest

The WHO warned against what seemed to be waning interest and concern over the dreaded H5N1 bird flu virus.

The avian flu has killed 119 persons of 312 who had been infected by poultry. What is feared is that the flu could mutate into a strain that could be easily passed between humans.

The WHO has recorded what is believed to be "limited human to human transmissions" of the deadly bird flu strain in Thailand and Indonesia. This was observed in secondary contacts by a family member who got the H5N1 strain after being exposed to infected poultry.

Rare

"Limited human-to-human transmission of H5N1 has occurred after very close, prolonged contact with a severely ill case, but (it) is very rare. (There is yet) no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission of the H5N1 virus," the WHO said in a report.

Kasai said countries could maintain a stockpile of Tamiflu and antibiotics, which could treat the flu. The problem is health experts could not easily predict what strain of the virus would trigger a pandemic. The WHO lists at least four strains of the H5N1 virus, each with different reactions to available medicine.

Vaccine

Kasai said drug manufacturers had come up with a "pre-pandemic vaccine" but not in huge doses. These are also not yet commercially available because nobody knows the exact virus strain to fight.

He said the available vaccine could even turn out to be useless if a new strain develops and causes the pandemic.

Avian flu has a relatively slower rate of mutation, but once it is passed on to humans, the rate would speed up, he said.

"Developing countries can only start producing vaccines only after identifying the responsible strain. So we better prepare more for possible health intervention rather than rely heavily on the vaccine," Kasai said.

He said it would probably take three to four months for a new vaccine to be formulated after the responsible strain is known.

Kasai spoke during a three-day workshop for journalists organized by the WHO here last week. The workshop aimed to improve communication between WHO officials and the media, as well as equip journalists with the information to better cover outbreaks.

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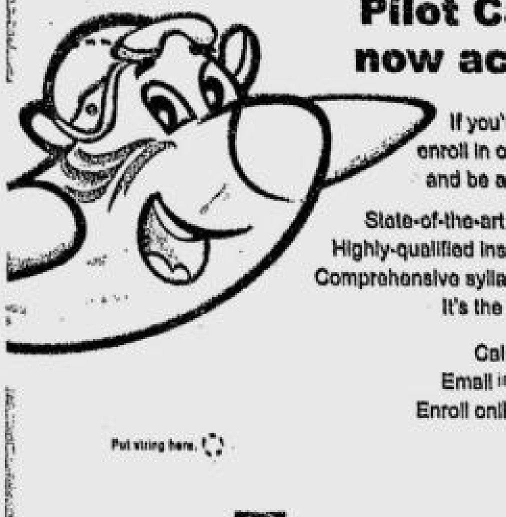

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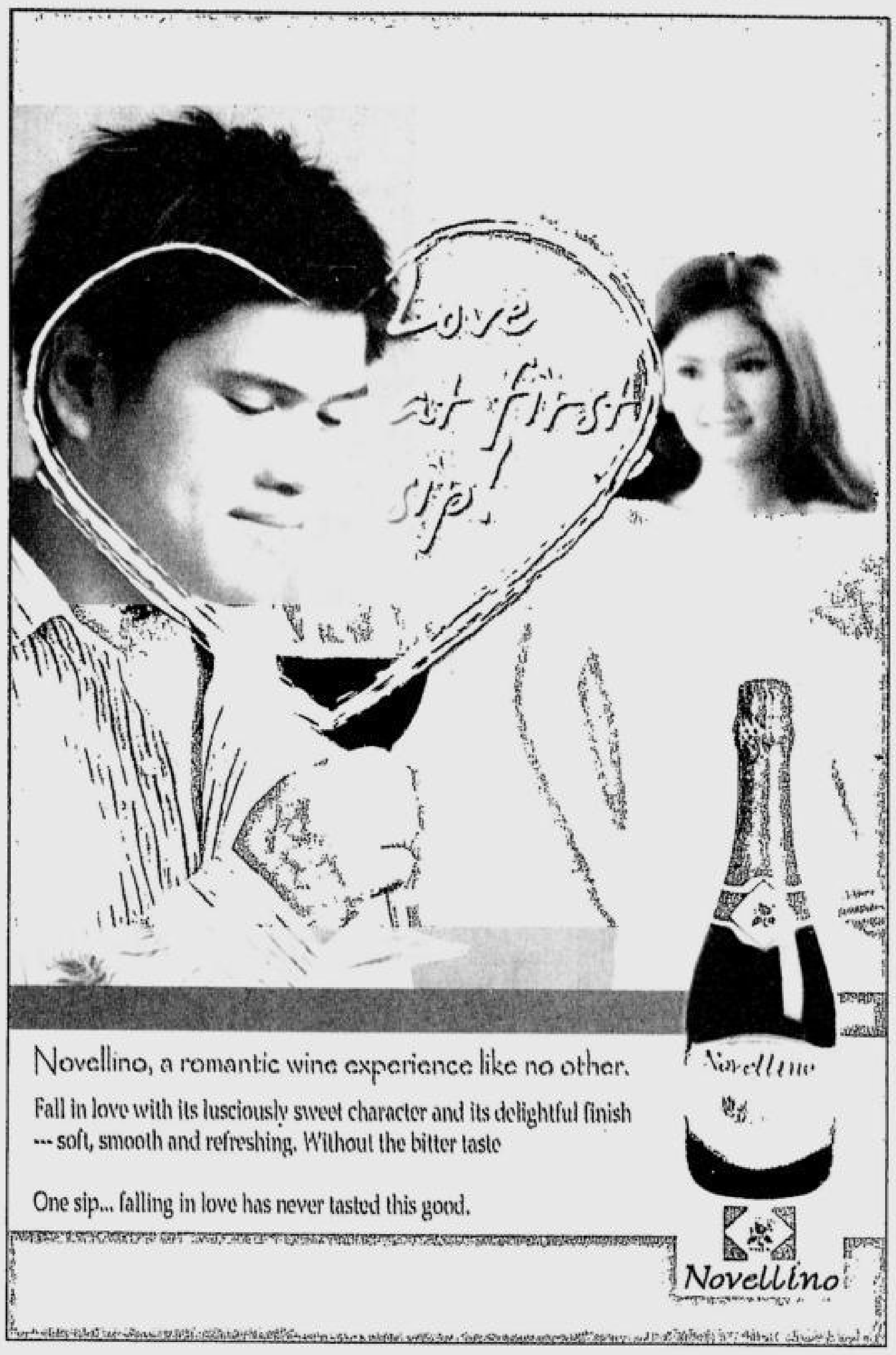

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Bedol challenges Comelec: Sue me

From page A1

(GO) and Juan Miguel Zubiri of Team Unity (TU) would sit in the Senate on June 30.

In his Cotabato City hometown, as well as in neighboring Maguindanao, the firearm assures him of security, Bedol said.

Not that he has anything to fear, he said.

A small armory

By his own admission, Bedol's personal armory includes a Magnum .357, four pistols and some 20 baby Armalites. He said he used to have an Uzi, but he gave it to his mother.

His collection of firearms, Bedol said, was nothing compared to those of others—mostly politicians—here and in the neighboring provinces who own thousands of firearms to protect themselves.

"To be a politician here you have to have guns, goons and gold," Bedol said.

He said he had never used his gun to shoot anyone, not even in self-defense.

"*Mapagmahal akong tao* (I am a loving person)," he laughed.

In the rain, in the dark

Bedol spoke to the INQUIRER and to GMA 7 reporter Jiggy Manicad for more than an hour in a gazebo as rain poured in the dimly lit, spacious garden of his home, a part of which his wife had converted into a mini-crab farm years ago.

It was the eve of the special canvassing of the MCoCs from Maguindanao's 22 towns which the Comelec had ordered after it set aside the initial provincial tabulation supervised by Bedol which showed TU senatorial candidates winning 12-0.

To reach Bedol, the INQUIRER and Manicad had to drive from General Santos City to Cotabato City, traversing roads that almost vanished in the dark because of the heavy rains.

At times, the road could be seen only when lightning struck or when the group hit a stretch of road with lampposts.

Numerous military and police checkpoints stood along the way.

Garci's inner circle

A contact man armed with a short firearm waited in front of a bank in Cotabato. He was armed with a short firearm, too.

The contact led the INQUIRER and GMA 7 to a small community where the roads grew narrower and narrower until the convoy reached a gate that led to a compound—where Bedol was waiting.

Here finally was the man who had been the center of national attention for weeks—the man who chaired the original provincial board of canvassers that submitted a vote tally showing a TU shutout win as well as zero votes for 19 candidates, which the Comelec said was "statistically improbable."

How democracy works

Bedol denied he had gone into hiding, even as he admitted that being tagged as a member of the supposed inner circle of disgraced former Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was among the likely reasons everyone had been coming down hard on him.

Bedol, who has been with the Comelec for 11 years, said he had accepted the accusations hurled at him because "to me, that's how democracy works."

But it was unfair, he said, to make sweeping allegations that Comelec officials like him were corrupt.

"It is more difficult for us to do something that is wrong. It is easier for us to do what is right," he said in Filipino.

However, Bedol said he wanted to avoid the "mistake" he and those mentioned in the controversial "Garci tapes" committed in trying to defend themselves during a Senate investigation.

The "Garci tapes" referred to supposed wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Garcillano on rigging the results of the 2004 presidential election. Both Ms Arroyo and Garcillano denied they cheated.

"If there was one mistake we did, we gave all our best answers and comments in our counteraffidavits but it did not prosper in the preliminary investigation," Bedol said.

Learning from mistake

This time, Bedol stressed, he wanted charges to be filed against him in court before he would answer any allegation made against him.

"Even the politicians who said I should be jailed should file a case against me if they really want that," Bedol said.

Even the Comelec's Task Force Maguindanao should file charges against him first before he submits the report which task force chair, Commissioner Ferrer, has been waiting for the past two weeks, he said.

"It was what my lawyers told me. I haven't been charged with anything yet. Why should I submit an answer?" said Bedol, a lawyer himself.

"I haven't gotten any missed calls from the Comelec," he said, looking at his cell phone, when asked about Ferrer's statement that he could not be located.

Bedol said he even had a small gathering on Saturday to celebrate his 54th birthday, attended by two of his three children, his wife and Comelec colleagues.

"I go to my office at the provincial capitol every day. Is that what you call hiding? I also wouldn't leave the country to hide because what could I do overseas? I couldn't practice law anywhere but here, even if I am also a Sharia lawyer," he said.

'Yes, I am a Garci boy'

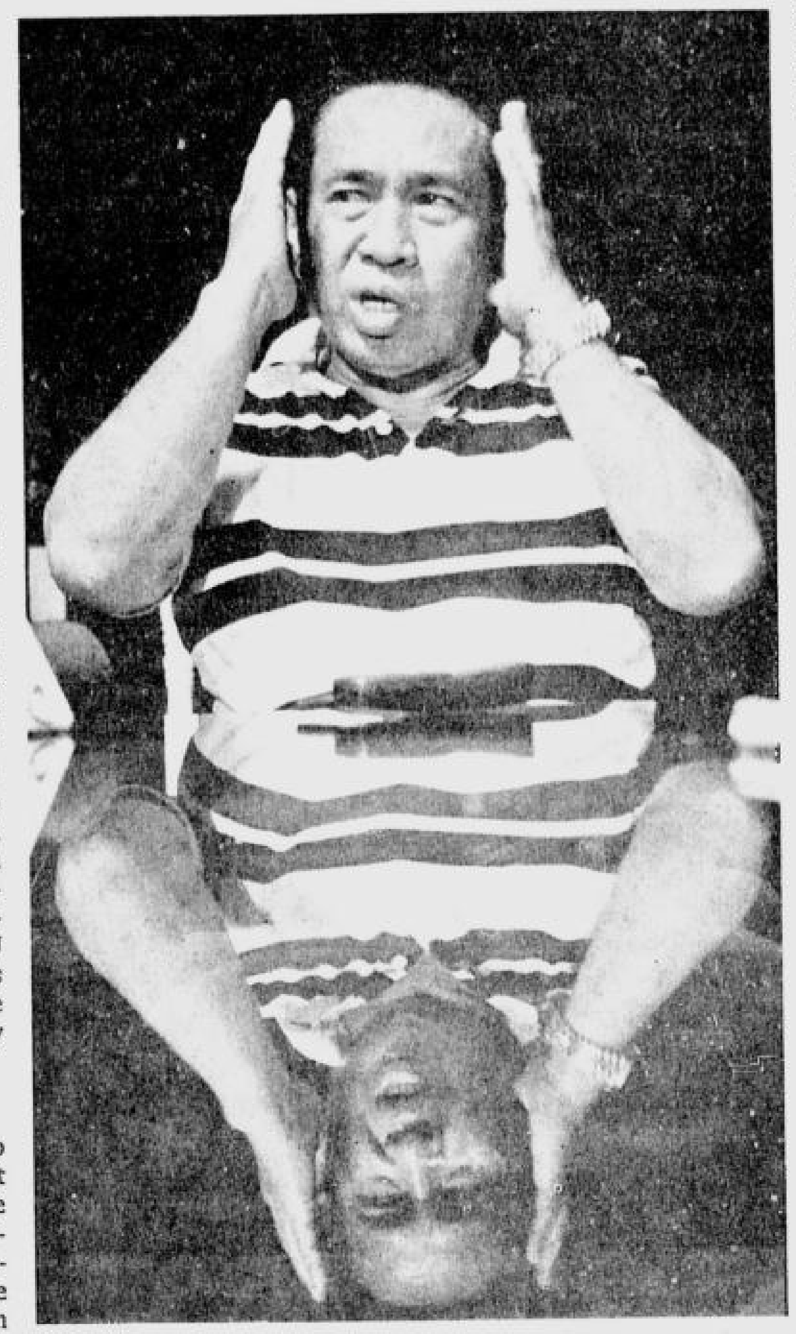
Bedol said he was "a Garci boy" if that meant being a good friend of Garcillano.

Asked if being mentioned in the Garci tapes was the reason everyone was quick to accuse him of cheating, Bedol replied: "I think so."

"Rey Sumalipao (Comelec regional director for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) is now being called Garci 2 and me, I'm supposed to be Garci 3. I don't deny that I remain close to Garci because he is a good person and a good friend," he said.

Bedol said he had not spoken to Garcillano to seek advice now that it was he at the center of a controversy.

"I'll see to it that I'll fight them (his critics) on my own," he said.



LINTANG H. Bedol gestures during an interview with INQUIRER and GMA 7 reporters at his house in Cotabato City on Monday. EDWIN BACASMAS

Quake rocks special count; Zubiri ahead

From page A1

In the three towns canvassed, 19 senatorial candidates consistently received zero votes.

In Manila, Task Force Maguindanao which was set up to investigate allegations of cheating during the elections, recommended the dismissal of controversial provincial election supervisor Lintang Bedol for losing the municipal CoCs, or vote tallies, that were in his custody.

"We recommended his (Bedol's) immediate relief but only of his duties as provincial election officer. We're not relieving him of his position (as a Comelec employee) because he is entitled to due process under the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Code," Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer, task force head, told reporters.

Ferrer also lambasted Bedol for not appearing before the Comelec in Manila despite orders for him to do so.

"He has made us a laughingstock and put us to shame by his nonappearance," Ferrer said. "We're not persecuting him. He lost the documents, isn't that an offense? If he's really innocent as he claims, then he should face us."

Opposition lawyers rebuffed

GO lawyers Sixto Brillantes and Leila de Lima decried the manner the canvassing was conducted, especially after Comelec lawyer Emilio Santos, chair of the special board of canvassers, denied each of their motions to be given a chance to question Bedol and the chairs of the municipal board of canvassers from 22 towns.

The GO lawyers told the board it appeared the proceedings were being "railroaded."

They also pointed out that the special board was reconvened by the commission through a resolution on Friday and not by the Comelec en banc sitting as the National Board of Canvassers, making it "illegal."

"We register our continuing objection to the legality of the special provincial board of canvassers. It has no personality, no authority to act," De Lima told Santos and board members, Comelec lawyers Manuel Lucero and Dinah Valencia.

De Lima insisted on the importance of being allowed to question the heads of the municipal boards "on the issue of execution and authenticity of the CoCs."

De Lima also wanted to ask Bedol to explain before the alleged loss of the first copies of the CoCs which would purportedly support administration claims that TU had scored a 12-0 sweep in the province.

Bedol has claimed they were stolen from his office.

De Lima stressed that the board should establish first if indeed the first copy were missing. The opposition has insisted it was these first copies that should be recanvassed.

Throughout the day, the feisty De Lima sounded pleading, angry and annoyed at the continued refusal of Santos to allow her and Brillantes to question the heads of municipal boards.

"Why your honor, can we not ask questions?" De Lima asked, stressing each word.

At some point, De Lima said: "This is all part of railroading of the proceedings."

Santos said that the opposition could bring all their objections before the National Board of Canvassers when it reconvenes in Manila.

Ironically, Santos began yesterday's canvassing by saying: "We are here to uncover the truth."

He also said that "the rules of an ordinary provincial board of canvassers" would not apply since his was a special board.

"So that makes this board a 'glorified' set of tabulators?" De Lima asked.

Throughout the day's exchange, Team Unity counsel George Garcia agreed with Santos' rulings. Santos told the INQUIRER the board's role was "summary in nature," which meant cross-examinations were no longer included.

A mild earthquake struck Shariff Aguak at about noon. Everyone taking part in the canvassing was having lunch at the time in the provincial administrator's room of the capitol building, and the room fell silent as the building shook.

In Manila, Ferrer said he wanted Bedol cited for indirect contempt for "continued and willful disobedience to orders" to present documents personally to the Commission so that the canvassing of Maguindanao votes could proceed.

He said Bedol should also be indicted for infidelity in the custody of documents. Bedol earlier admitted the Maguindanao vote tallies were stolen from his office.

The commissioner lamented that Bedol had remained "missing," saying: "We sent our people around and we cannot find him."

Ferrer said the task force had issued a "show cause order" for Bedol to answer the accusations against him.

Kid-glove treatment

According to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr., Bedol will be given three days to answer the order.

"Let's give him the chance to explain. This is part of due process; we have to follow a procedure provided under the law," Abalos said in a separate interview.

The chair also lashed Comelec critics who accused the poll body of according "kid-glove treatment" to Bedol and who wanted the official "hanged immediately," saying it would be the prosecutor and the court to find out whether there was substantial evidence to charge Bedol and issue the corresponding warrant of arrest.

"If the legal procedures are not followed, the case might be dismissed," he said. "That's why we gave him time to answer. But it seems he has already waived this right by not showing."

Abalos, however, warned that it would be to Bedol's disadvantage if he refused to answer the show cause order.

Supreme Court action

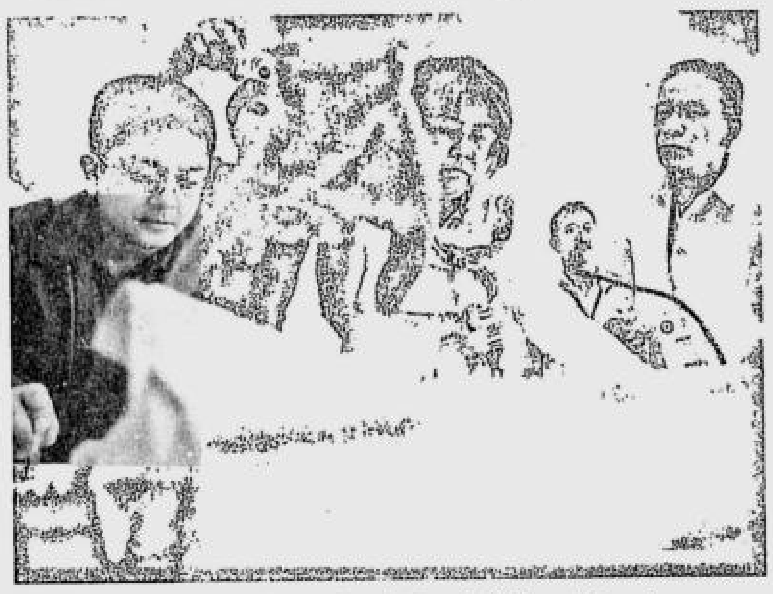
"If you're being accused and you don't answer or show up, then it's to your disadvantage because your side won't be heard," he said in an appeal to Bedol.

Abalos also said that only the Supreme Court could stop the Comelec from canvassing the senatorial results from Maguindanao and proclaiming the duly elected 12th winning senator.

"If there will be a temporary restraining order issued, we have to stop it whichever phase we were in," Abalos told reporters.

Pimentel, the 12th placer in the official tally and with 111,000-plus vote lead over Zubiri, last week filed a complaint with the Supreme Court seeking to stop the inclusion of the votes from Maguindanao. He said the Maguindanao vote tallies were manufactured.

The Supreme Court is expected to hear oral arguments on Pimentel's petition today.



TEAM UNITY lawyer George Erwin Garcia (left) and Genuine Opposition counsel Leila de Lima go over the municipal certificate of canvass from South Upi during the recanvassing of votes in Maguindanao held at the capitol in Shariff Aguak on Monday. Looking on at right is lawyer Emilio Santos of the special provincial board of canvassers. EDWIN BACASMAS

Gov't radio reporter shot dead in Tawi-Tawi

From page A1

"Enteng" Sumalpong, a senior reporter of the government-owned Radyo ng Bayan station in Tawi-Tawi, at 8 a.m. in the capital town of Bongao. Sumalpong's fellow employee and a nephew were wounded in the attack.

Sumalpong, 36, was the fourth journalist killed this year, the 53rd since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001 and the 90th since the Marcos dictatorship was overthrown in 1986, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

"The shooting was so quick and I think it was over in less than 30 seconds . . . They quickly fled as we lay on the ground," Vema Antham, who worked with Sumalpong at Radyo ng Bayan, told the INQUIRER over the telephone.

Antham, 35, said the assassins struck as she, Sumalpong and his nephew were about to leave her house on a motorcycle.

She said Sumalpong, who picked her up every morning on his way to work, shielded her with his body when the two gunmen opened fire. Antham and Sumalpong's nephew, Totong Borja, were both wounded in the leg.

Antham said Sumalpong died on the way to the Datu Halun Memorial Hospital.

She said she could identify the two gunmen if she saw them again.

2 angles

Senior Supt. Imlani Anni, Tawi-Tawi police chief, said investigators were pursuing two angles in the killing.

"One is the shooting incident in one of the beer houses here where a bar girl got killed . . . and the other is the internal power struggle at their radio station," Anni said.

He said Sumalpong recently filed with police a complaint of verbal abuse and harassment against a Radyo ng Bayan employee. Anni declined to identify the employee pending completion of the investigation.

Zenaida Masong, Radyo ng Bayan station manager in Sulu, said Sumalpong had asked her to work on his transfer to Sulu "because the working environment in Tawi-Tawi was no longer healthy."

Masong said she advised Sumalpong to seek the approval of the Radyo ng Bayan central office in Metro Manila.

Antham declined to talk about Sumalpong's problem at the radio station, but she confirmed he had helped several bar girls leave Tawi-Tawi after the shooting incident last week.

"We have some internal problems, but I cannot give any details right now because I, too, am under threat," Antham said.

She appealed to the authorities to facilitate the immediate transfer of her family from Tawi-Tawi to Metro Manila. "If I and my family stay longer here, we might end up like Enteng," Antham, who has six children, said.

Rowena Paraan, NUJP secretary general and coordinator of the International Federation of Journalists-NUJP safety office, said "a deep investigation of the case should include Radyo ng Bayan officials."

"All possibilities have to be considered, including the reported rift within the station," Paraan said.

Peace advocates

Cecile Abuy, reporter of RPN-9 in Zamboanga City, said the ambush was "an attack on freedom of expression."

"These two guys were not hard-hitting journalists, they were dedicated peace advocates and had never been involved in any controversy," Abuy told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

NUJP chair Jose Torres said the killing of Sumalpong raised doubts on Ms Arroyo's pledge to stop the murder of journalists.

"He was not considered a hard-hitting journalist. This means no one is safe. Everyone is now a target. Whether police say the killing was or was not work-related, the issue here is whether this government is truly committed to democracy and freedom," Torres said.

"This is a sad day for Philippine journalism. Despite statements made by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that government would address the problem, the killings persist," he added.

In a recent dialogue with media groups in Malacañang, Ms Arroyo ordered the designation of a special prosecution team to handle the killings of journalists. She also promised "to break this cycle of violence once and for all."

John Manalili, deputy director of the Bureau of Broadcast Services that oversees the operations of Radyo ng Bayan, urged the police and the military to promptly investigate the killing.

"We hope they can set the record straight lest some sectors link this to extrajudicial killings," he said.

Palace order

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had ordered the police to step up the investigation and hunt for the killers of Sumalpong.

The Arroyo administration has drawn heavy flak at home and abroad for the rising number of unsolved killings not only of journalists but also of leftists, human rights lawyers and government critics.

International media groups, like Reporters Without Borders and the International Press Institute, consider the Philippines the most dangerous place for journalists to work in next to Iraq. *With reports from Ed General and Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao; Alcuin Papa and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila; and AP, AFP and Reuters*

Infants deaths not only due to formula–PHAP

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE PHARMACEUTICAL AND HEALTHCARE Association of the Philippines yesterday claimed reports by local and international health organizations that thousands of babies died every year because of complications brought about by infant formula were "misleading."

"The number is not supported by any national or international statistics and many non-breast-fed infants do not receive infant formula and use inappropriate alternatives," the PHAP said in a statement.

The PHAP is locked in a legal battle with the Department of Health over the authority of the department to expand the scope of the country's Milk Code. The code, as passed by Congress, regulates the advertisement for infant formula for babies up to one year, but new DOH implementing rules include products for babies up to two years.

In the same statement, PHAP said it "believes unequivocally that breast-feeding is the gold standard for infant nutrition," but it added that "the reality is that many mothers find themselves in situations where they choose not to breast-feed, cannot breastfeed or stop breastfeeding for various reasons."

Mother's right

In a press conference organized by PHAP yesterday, US-based pediatrician William MacLean Jr. said that mothers had the right to decide not to breast-feed their babies.

The PHAP listed several reasons women choose not to breast-feed. The leading reason is when mothers do not have enough milk. Others develop breast problems while others are busy with work. Other reasons are when the child is ill, when the mother was ill or when the baby refuses to be breastfed.

"We do not want to create an environment where those who do not breast-feed are not getting adequate information. We have to care for all infants (those who are breast-fed and those who are not)," MacLean added.

It may be a distant second to breast milk, but MacLean said infant formula was still better than other alternatives parents are using like cow's milk, evaporated milk and others.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Food and Drugs met with the multinational milk company Wyeth yesterday to discuss the implementation of its order to recall milk cans and boxes with damaged or rusted packages.

BFAD deputy director Joshua Ramos told the INQUIRER after the meeting that anyone who had bought affected infant formula products could have these replaced at supermarkets and Wyeth company offices.

Buyers need not show a receipt. Affected cans, could be determined based on their alphanumeric codes. Cans already opened would also be replaced, but only if they were at least half-filled. Empty cans would not be accepted.

Brands affected by the recall are Bonakid, Bonamil, Bonna, Progress Gold, Promil, Promil Gold and Promil Kid, manufactured between May 23 and July 26 last year.

Pinay's death 'mysterious'; DFA orders embassy probe

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS yesterday ordered the Philippine Embassy in Qatar to dig deeper into the death of a Filipino domestic helper in Doha after reports said her body bore signs of torture.

An ABS-CBN news report from Qatar had said 24-year-old Melissa Leseniana, who was found dead in her room on June 22, had bruises on her face and head. A mark on her neck discovered by the police suggested she might have been strangled.

Police also recovered her blood-stained pillow and said it was investigating whether Leseniana, who had been working in Qatar for two years, had been raped.

In a report to the DFA, Philippine Chargé d'Affaires Rosario Lemque in Doha said they were coordinating with Qatari authorities on the investigation of Leseniana's death.

Embassy personnel went to the Hamad Hospital Morgue where the autopsy was being conducted to view the body but were not allowed to take photographs.

Lemque said they were able to secure a copy of Leseniana's passport at the police station. Her personal belongings were also found to be intact there.

According to the DFA, Leseniana's Egyptian employer is in police custody while the investigation is ongoing.

Lemque also said the government would provide assistance to her relatives and report to them any new developments.

Esteva case

Meanwhile, the DFA said yesterday it was providing assistance to an overseas Filipino worker suspected of killing his employer in Saudi Arabia.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said the embassy there had been instructed to help Joven Esteva who was arrested by police for allegedly killing his employer on June 3. He is currently detained at the Malaz Central Jail in Riyadh.

Philippine Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Antonio Villamor has asked the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs for assistance in getting permission to visit Esteva.

Villamor said they would also secure the services of a Saudi lawyer for Esteva.

Death in Yemen

At the same time, foreign affairs officials are verifying reports that a Filipino worker in Yemen was gunned down by a soldier who ran amuck in a remote province there.

DFA spokesperson Claro Cristobal said consulate officials in Riyadh were told to proceed to Yemen because the Philippines does not have an embassy in that African nation.

According to reports from Yemen's interior ministry, a soldier with "emotional problems" gunned down two Asian workers, including a Filipino, working for Occidental Petroleum Corp. (Oxy) in the eastern province of Shabwah. A senior American executive, two Britons, a Yemeni and a Tunisian were also seriously wounded in the shooting spree.

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Young entrepreneur May Chelli Adasa (third from left, holding her business name certificate) with (L to R) DTI NCR Regional Caretaker Teresa Pelayo, DTI Senior Undersecretary Thomas Aquino, DTI Secretary Peter Favila, GXI President Rizza Maniego-Eala, DTI Undersecretary Carissa Evangelista, Sun Microsystems (Phils) President and Managing Director Cynthia Mamon, and DTI MIS Director Vina Liza Ruth Cabrera.

GCASH

GCash and DTI join hands to help Filipino entrepreneurs

Applying for a new business name with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has never been easier with GCash. Through DTI's Business Name Registration System (BNRS) Online Payment Facility, business owners can now pay for fees just by logging on to the Internet and by having GCash in their Globe or TM SIMs. GCash is the revolutionary mobile commerce platform powered by G–Xchange, Inc. (GXI)—a wholly owned subsidiary of Globe Telecom—that turns your cellphone into a mobile wallet which lets you send and receive payments through a simple text message.

DTI Secretary Peter Favila awards young entrepreneur May Chelli Adasa her business name registration certificate, which was applied and paid for in under five minutes using GCash via the DTI's Business Name Registration System (BNRS) Online Payment Facility.

A live demonstration of the BNRS Online Payment Facility was conducted recently at its official launch, with the entire registration process taking just less than five minutes. May Chelli Adasa, a young laundry shop owner, simply logged on to the BNRS website and followed the easy step-by-step instructions. After confirming her business name and details, she then chose to pay her registration fee with GCash. She was asked for her 11-digit mobile number, and promptly received an SMS asking for confirmation of the DTI payment. Ms. Adasa then replied with her PIN to complete the transaction. Immediately, she received a text message confirming her payment and serving as an official receipt for her to claim her signed and sealed registration certificate. "It's very encouraging to have a system like this that's very quick and easy to use. It frees me up to focus more on my business," Ms. Adasa said.

On hand for the BNRS launch were (L to R) DTI Senior Undersecretary Thomas Aquino, DTI Secretary Peter Favila, and GXI President Rizza Maniego-Eala.

"The BNRS-GCash online payment facility is an affirmation of DTI's commitment to customer service and e-government. It is another means to facilitate and simplify business procedures and boost our anti-red tape efforts. We want our clients to have a good business name registration and business name renewal experience," said DTI Secretary Peter B. Favila.

"We want to reach out to more of our clients across all sectors, encourage the creation and expansion of businesses and investments, and unleash the Filipinos' entrepreneurial spirit, whether online or offline!" agreed DTI Senior Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino.

"Today marks yet another milestone for GCash as we launch our partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry and provide an enabling platform that contributes to promoting further efficiency in the delivery of government services to provide the best public service to Filipinos," said GXI President Rizza Maniego-Eala.

The BNRS brings the power and convenience of e–commerce to more Filipinos, as entrepreneurs now have a better way to establish their businesses. GCash payment for the BNRS is currently available in the NCR, Rizal, Laguna, Bulacan, Pampanga, and Iloilo, but will be implemented in more areas within the year. To find out more, visit *www.bnrs.dti.gov.ph*

dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

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More jobs today in Subic ...

From page A1

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said.

CDC and SBMA are government-owned corporations created by Congress to oversee the conversion of Clark and Subic. Their mother agency is the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Pullout of US forces

The government undertook the base conversion program in 1992, a year after the pullout of the US military and the eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo.

The Philippines regained control of the base lands, which cover at least 100,000 hectares, when the Senate rejected the extension of the 1947 military bases agreement in 1991.

Laus said the growing employment at Clark could be attributed to the "increased confidence of investors and locators in President Macapagal-Arroyo's support for the development of the free port."

Tax incentives regained

Investors regained their tax incentives in April this year when legislators, led by Sen. Ralph Recto, worked to amend Republic Act No. 7227 or the Bases Conversion Law that did not contain explicit provisions on business perks unlike those enjoyed by locators at the Subic free port.

In the campaign to regain the benefits, Ms Arroyo had certified two bills as urgent.

Clark has "steadily achieved the vision of President Macapagal-Arroyo to make it one of the employment capitals in the country today," Laus said.

Growth drivers

In Clark, as of May, companies producing garments, electronic parts, furniture and other crafts were the top job generators at the free port.

They were followed by business process outsourcing (BPO) firms and tourism-related companies.

There are 107 firms in service-related businesses, 115 firms in the industrial sector, 28 in commercial, 21 in aviation, 16 in tourism, 31 in BPO and information technology, 8 in utility and 4 in housing, according to CDC records.

Their committed investments for 2006 totaled P22.3 billion. Exports in Clark last year reached more than $1 billion.

TI facility

New jobs will be generated when Texas Instruments Inc., the world's biggest maker of mobile phone chips, starts construction of a $1-billion semiconductor facility in Clark in July or August.

The TI facility will cover eight hectares and could create a total of 10,000 new jobs at full capacity, Trade Secretary Peter Favila said last month. The facility will start production in 2008.

In Subic, the services sector accounted for the biggest number of employees with 32,599 or 48.27 percent of the total work force. The manufacturing and construction sectors came second and third, respectively.

Unlike in Clark where women workers are the majority, men hold most of the jobs in Subic. Most workers in Clark come from Pampanga while those in Subic are largely residents of Olongapo City, which is just outside the free port.

Laus said most of the Clark-based companies complied with the minimum wage law. The daily minimum wage in Central Luzon ranges from P178.50 to P228.50, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

The Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board approved in July 2006 at least P14.50 to P18.50 in additional cost of living allowance, which will be integrated in the daily wages next month.

Banner year

SBMA Chair Feliciano Salonga called 2006 a "banner year" because of the "newfound vibrancy prevailing at the free port."

Revenue collections, for one, amounted to P6.9 billion, which went to the national treasury. The registered enterprises at the Subic free port reached 981 as of April.

The SBMA directors approved 129 new projects worth $1.43 billion in 2006.

Salonga said Korean and Chinese businesses accounted for the biggest foreign direct investment (FDI) in the free port, with the entry of Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd. and Hebei Xingtai Jingniu Glass Co. Ltd., among others.

Arreza said Hanjin, one of the world's largest shipbuilding firms, on Monday raised its employment target from 7,000 to 15,000.

Logistics hub

President Macapagal-Arroyo has envisioned Clark and Subic as a unified logistics hub that would be the "best" in Southeast Asia.

Both free ports host international airports, the biggest being the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark where at least five low-cost airlines have operated since 2006.

A Japanese government-funded 94-km highway linking the two free ports is being built on the western ranges of Central Luzon, and the BCDA is working to arrest months of delay in the project supposedly due to right-of-way problems.

The Subic Port Development Project is nearing completion, funded also by a loan from the Japanese government.

Arreza said SBMA was gearing to achieve a "much bigger performance ... and drive growth and employment by aiming to attract investment pledges of up to $5 billion, creating 100,000 jobs, and posting $2 billion export by the year 2010."

AERIAL view of the bustling Subic Bay Freeport which has attracted hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign investments generating tens of thousands of jobs. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov't warned people of economic fallout, security threats

From page A1

down, thousands of residents of Olongapo and Central Luzon would lose their jobs.

Meanwhile, then Vice President Salvador Laurel expressed fears that the expulsion of US forces would lead to a security vacuum in Asia.

Renato de Villa, defense secretary at the time, also worried about the effects of a "no" vote on the Armed Forces of the Philippines. "The modernization program (of the AFP) would ground to a halt since it takes an enormous amount of money to pursue such plans under our own resources," he said.

To persuade the senators to vote in favor of the new treaty, Aquino appealed for a repeat of the 1986 People Power that put her in power. On Sept. 10, 1991, she led a rally at Rizal Park. But the crowd, which police estimated to number between 150,000 and 200,000, fell short of the expected one million attendees.

On Sept. 16, the Senate voted 12-11, rejecting the new treaty, ending nearly a century of US military presence in the country.

In 1993, Aquino's successor Fidel Ramos appointed Gordon administrator of Subic. During his term, Gordon transformed the base into a free port and investment destination. *Inquirer Research*

CLARK Air Base in Pampanga, which used to be home to the US 13th Air Force, is now Clark Field and the site of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport. TONETTE T. OREJAS/ INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Chien-Fu Kao	Computer Programmer-Division Executive
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Chih-Hsiang Yu a.k.a. Ladious Yu	Computer Programmer Senior Specialist
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Wei-Min Tang a.k.a. Rad Tang	Director of Computer Program
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Tang-An Wang	Computer Programmer #3 Sub Division Chief
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Kun-Tai Li	Computer Programmer-Sub Division Chief
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Tso-Wen Chu	Senior Secretary
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Ya-Min Chen	Computer Programmer-Division Executive
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Tsung-Fu Lin	Senior Systems Analyst- Specialist in Computer Applications Development
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, No. 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Zi-Hsuan Min a.k.a Jerry Min	Operating Sub Division Chief
PROV INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC. 37/F GT International Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. H.V. dela Costa St., Makati City	Saravanan Chandran	Financial Controller
PACIFIC STAR & SEO HYUN TOUR CORP. 4/F Coretown Bldg., 2822 EDSA Extn., Pasay City	Seok Young Woo	Operations Manager
TOUR WANNABE, INC. 2/F Financial Center, D. Macapagal Ave., Pasay City	Hyun Jin Park (w/o Kiefer)	Sales Consultant
STYRAN IMMIGRATION CONSULTANCY 430 Cupang, Muntinlupa City	So Young Jang	Marketing Consultant
XAVIER SCHOOL (ALSO KNOWN AS KUANG CHI SCHOOL) INC. 64 Xavier St., Greenhills West, San Juan, MM	Huabing Wang	Grade School Chinese Teacher
XAVIER SCHOOL (ALSO KNOWN AS KUANG CHI SCHOOL) INC. 64 Xavier St., Greenhills West, San Juan, MM	Xijia Lu	Grade School Chinese Teacher
SOMERSET OLYMPIA MAKATI SERVICED RESIDENCES (FTL HOTELS, INC.) 7912 Makati Ave., Makati City	Christopher Thomson	Assistant Residence Manager
TOUR CARE TRAVEL & TOUR INC. 1105 Pearl of the Orient, 1240 Roxas Blvd., Manila	Hyun Joung Han (w/o Choi)	General Manager
AC REAL ESTATE CORPORATION - PHIL. BRANCH 10/F High Rise Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Mitsuru Katayama	Engineering Consultant
PHILIPPINE SOFTWARE BRIDGE BUSINESS INC. Unit 2305-B West Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Jun Hiruta	Assistant General Manager
HYUNDI GEN. POWER PHIL. CORP. 4/F HRC Bldg., 1774 Adriatico St., Malate, Manila	Seung Jae Han	Operations Manager
CERAGEM PHILIPPINES CO., INC. U-2501 25/F Tektite East Tower, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Ha Na Yoo	Translator
CERAGEM PHILIPPINES CO., INC. U-2501 25/F Tektite East Tower, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Kwang Bum Hur	Director

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 330-2013 & 303-5828.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI -June 26, 2007)

NBI sees foul play in loss of 'broadband...

From page A1

tions Technology.

It is the first communications accord to be entered into by the Philippines with China, a rising global power. Only the United States and other Western nations had previously been given the privilege of installing vast communication networks in the country.

The project, under the 20-year government-to-government deal covered by a Chinese loan at 3-percent annual interest, is designed to meet the telecommunications needs of national government agencies and local government units down to the barangay level.

Security matters

Asked about the ramifications of the deal in the context of the US-led war on global terrorism, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the Philippines, in effect, ceded to a foreign power "other than America and the rest of the free world" certain rights in a field as vital as communications, an integral part of security.

"Security considerations are vital parts of US concerns. The bottom line, however, is the fact that the Philippines deals with one on top of the others, making China a real Southeast Asia economic military power player. This probably rankles Uncle Sam," Pimentel said in a phone interview.

Asked why anyone would steal the documents, the senator said it "must contain matters incriminatory of certain power brokers ... something that can't be explained away."

Malacañang yesterday said it was not aware if both parties had already reconstructed the five MOAs signed by ZTE vice president Yu Yong and Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

Charges

The NBI is set to file charges against Ang for violation of Article 217 (malversation of public funds and property) in relation to Article 2, Paragraph 4 (extraterritorial application of criminal law) of the Revised Penal Code before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Ang, 31, is also director of the Philippine Trade and Investment Center under the Department of Trade and Industry.

Mantaring said the NBI, after a thorough investigation of "documentary and testimonial" evidence, found that "the missing documents were not accidentally lost." The theft took place at the Meritus Mandarin Hotel in Haikou, Hainan.

"Such were intentionally lost due to sinister motives," he said, adding that it was "highly suspicious that the documents would be misplaced."

"It is very unusual for Emmanuel Ang to entrust the same to Allan Liu, if such was true, considering the importance and sensitivity of the documents. Even if Allan Liu already builds trust and confidence in Emmanuel Ang, it is very imperative for the latter to secure the documents for such were the fruits of their labor," Mantaring told Mendoza in a memorandum on May 24.

NBI report

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the memorandum over the weekend.

The NBI chief said the claim that both Ang and Liu lacked sleep for 35 hours due to preparations made for the MOA signing was not an "excuse" for the attaché not to secure the documents after the ceremony in a room at the Haikou Meilan International Airport.

"The more he should secure the same after the signing. Otherwise, he's negligent enough to let somebody steal it or he intentionally gave it to someone, whom they only knew," Mantaring noted.

When the NBI interviewed Liu and Ang, "their statements were conflicting and they keep on changing them," he said.

After the 2 p.m. signing, Ang, who was officially in charge of the logistics and administrative organization of the ceremony and custody of the MOA, collected all the signed documents and placed them in a cardboard envelope, the NBI report said.

At about 2:15 p.m., Ang and Liu proceeded to collect all their luggage and boarded a van to Meritus Mandarin where they were billeted. Upon arrival at the hotel at around 2:50 p.m., they alighted from the van, placed their things, including the envelope containing the MOAs, onto the hotel's luggage carts and headed straight to their rooms.

Missing?

At midnight, as Ang was packing up for his flight to the Philippines the next day, he called up Liu and asked for the documents, but was informed that Liu could not find the envelope in his room, the report said.

Thinking that the envelope might have fallen while in transit to Liu's room, Ang told authorities that they immediately contacted housekeeping and security, as well as the van driver, but they did not find it.

The NBI report showed that Ang and Liu looked for the documents at the airport VIP room at around 1 a.m. on April 22, but the search was fruitless.

Video surveillance

Ang even met with Richard Zhang, the hotel's duty manager, to check the hotel's video surveillance tape. In the video, Ang identified the envelope on the luggage cart and tracked it from the lobby to the 13th floor where their rooms were.

Ang alleged that Liu went out to eat between 8 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. The video during the period showed no one carrying an envelope. No hotel key card was used to enter Liu's room.

Assisted by the hotel management, the consular official claimed that members of the staff, including the bellboys, were questioned. He then called up his contacts at the Hainan Department of Commerce to assist him in reporting the incident to the police.

The police conducted an investigation until 3 a.m. of April 23 but they still did not find the envelope or a logical explanation for its disappearance, the NBI said.

The NBI claimed that Ang kept defending Liu. The Chinese denied involvement or knowledge of the missing documents, saying that he was not aware that the MOAs were in his custody.

Liu said he had no contact with the rivals of ZTE Corp.

Break textbook cartel, education chief urged

By Jerry E. Esplanada

BREAK THE TEXTBOOK CARTEL.

The call—addressed to Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus and other top Department of Education officials—was sounded by some oldtimers at the DepEd and members of the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT).

It was "more of a challenge than an appeal," said a staffer at the DepEd main office in Pasig City.

Lapus had admitted a group of suppliers had been cornering huge textbook contracts.

"*Mayroon talagang magaling, mayroon* careless and *may naka-* master *na siguro ng ano* (There are some really good ones, some are careless and some have become masters at 'whatever')," he said, referring to the suppliers without elaborating.

"But from where we sit we can only act on what is legal," he added.

"We follow set rules. We're transparent and if there are any complaints, any protests, there are mechanisms," he said.

Lapus asked disgruntled textbook suppliers and printers anew to come out and lodge formal complaints.

"They have to tell us. We can't just investigate based on all the noise in the media. They have to come up with proof that some suppliers are getting special treatment from DepEd ... I will not allow that. In fact, I don't even know any of these guys," he said.

Low-quality content

Earlier, he told the INQUIRER: "If there is such a textbook cartel, maybe it has been here for decades now. But there must be a complaint supported by evidence. I can't just ban suppliers without the benefit of an investigation and due process."

Lapus, a former Tarlac representative and LandBank chair and CEO, said he could not just cleanse the DepEd, the biggest department in the Arroyo administration, overnight.

He lamented that too much attention was being paid to the DepEd when "operators are all the same in all government procurements."

Antonio Tinio, chair of the 15,000-strong ACT, said the DepEd's "centralized procurement system for textbooks" was to blame for the problem.

The system, Tinio said, "has provided the conditions for the emergence of a textbook cartel dominated by big publishing companies. It is susceptible to large-scale corruption and has failed to produce high quality content."

"Maybe it's time to seriously consider decentralizing the procurement of textbooks," he said in a text message.

Improve efficiency, transparency

In a statement, Lapus said the DepEd was "adopting reform measures to further enhance its capability to provide quality textbooks for all public schools nationwide."

He said that "as part of ongoing textbook procurement reforms, the bidding for content has been separated from the bidding for printing, beginning with the procurement of English textbooks this year."

"We want a wider playing field from among qualified suppliers and we encourage printers with good track records to join the bidding," he said. "That way, we can evaluate book content separately and thoroughly."

This, he said, would "lead to the best content and the best printing quality."

The DepEd has created three bidding and awards committees (BAC) to "improve efficiency and transparency."

With the three BACs, each with their own secretariat, "we can ensure that all concerns are addressed at the soonest possible time," Lapus said.

PAL workers will have to wait longer for 1988 13th-month pay

By Leila B. Salaverria

EMPLOYEES OF PHILIPPINE AIRLINES WILL have to wait for the company to recover financially before their claims for 13th-month pay for some of them could be resolved, the Supreme Court said.

The high tribunal suspended proceedings in the labor dispute between Philippine Airlines Employees Association (Palea) and Philippine Airlines Inc. because the national flag carrier was still undergoing rehabilitation.

It also directed PAL to periodically update the court on the status of its rehabilitation and warned that defying the directive would result in sanctions.

"In view of the ongoing rehabilitation of petitioner Philippine Airlines Inc., herein proceedings are heretofore suspended until further notice from this Court. Accordingly, petitioner is hereby ordered to quarterly update the Court as to the status of its ongoing rehabilitation within ten days from the beginning of every quarter, with a warning that noncompliance therewith will merit disciplinary sanctions," the high court said in a June 19 resolution.

Stop monetary claims

PAL, Asia's oldest airline, went into rehabilitation in 1999 because of labor disputes and problems with paying off a $2.2 billion debt.

In temporarily halting proceedings in the labor dispute, the Supreme Court said earlier cases had established the need to stop monetary claims against a financially distressed company so as not to dissipate its resources.

It said the purpose of the rehabilitation might be defeated if the court allowed claims against the company to continue.

"This Court's adherence to the above-stated rule has been resolute and steadfast as evidenced by its oft-repeated application in a plethora of cases," it said.

The labor dispute between PAL and Palea stemmed from the former's refusal to give the 13th-month pay to the association's members who were regularized after April 30, 1988, as purportedly stated in the company's collective bargaining agreement.

Palea said all its members, whether regular or not, should receive the 13th-month pay stipulated in the CBA.

Unfair labor practice

But PAL said rank and file employees who became regular employees after April 30, 1988, were not entitled to the 13th-month pay because they were given Christmas bonuses in December 1988. It added that the employees could be, in principle, considered to have received their 13th-month pay when they got their Christmas bonuses.

The employees filed a complaint for unfair labor practice against PAL in 1989. The labor arbiter ruled against the employees, but the decision was reversed on appeal by the National Labor Relations Commission.

PAL's appeal of the decision was denied and the case was elevated to the Court of Appeals, which sided with the NLRC.

PAL then questioned the appellate court's decision before the Supreme Court.

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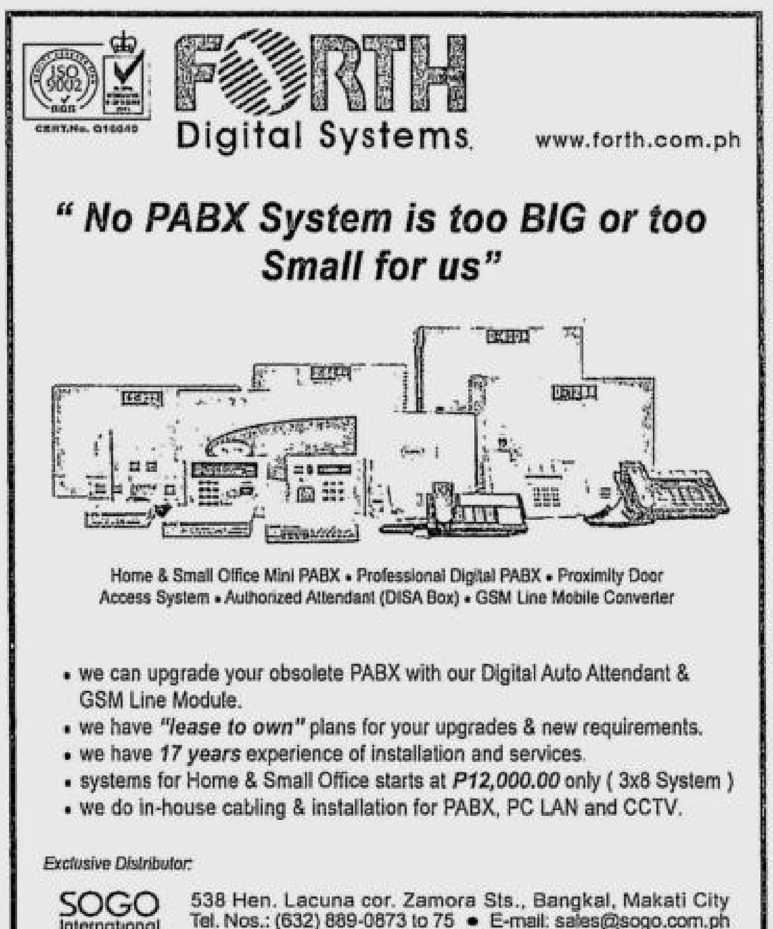

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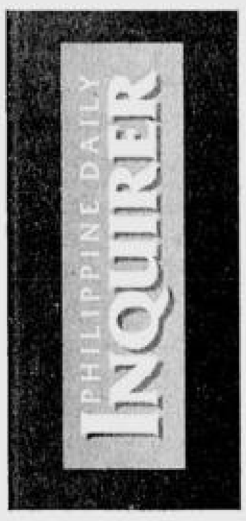

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE AFP BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Radio, Electrical & Instrument [REI] and Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory [PMEL] Enhancement Project and its ILS Package)

1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), through the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) Number D-07-05077 dated 15 March 2007, intends to apply the sum of **FORTY TWO MILLION NINETEEN THOUSAND PESOS (Php 42,019,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the corresponding contract for the *REI & PMEL Enhancement Project.* Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the GHQ BAC1, now invites prospective Bidders for the project below:

Item Nr	Nomenclature/Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Price of Bid Documents	Delivery Schedule
	GHQ BAC1-MOD-PA-10-07			
	• Procurement: Equipment, Accessories, Harnass, Manuals, Special Tools, Mock-Up and Support Equipment	Php42,019,000.00	Php15,000.00	Within 45 days after the issuance of LC
	• Repair of Mock-up			Within 45 days after the issuance of LC
	• Calibration of Equipment			Within 90 days upon turnover of equipment
	• Training Equipment			Within 145 days after issuance of LC
	• Formal Training on PMEL Course			Within 1 year after issuance of LC
	• ILS Package PMEL Calibration			Within 1 year after issuance of LC

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedure using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws and regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). The process for the eligibility, technical and financial checking are described in Sections II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who would be determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from AFP Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8.00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday excluding holidays.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee. The method of payment will be on cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The AFP BAC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **1:30 p.m., July 4, 2007 (Wednesday)** at Silid Panday Pira, G/F Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on **9:00 a.m., July 18, 2007 (Wednesday)**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any form and corresponding amount allowed under RA 9184 and its IRR-A. Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **9:00 a.m., July 18, 2007 (Wednesday)** at Silid Panday Pira, G/F Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. Only offers or bids from prospective bidders who are the manufacturers, distributors or suppliers or their duly authorized representatives shall be entertained. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking similar projects within the last five (5) years with at least three (3) similar projects having an aggregate contract cost equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC of the project, and the largest of these similar projects must be equivalent to at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the ABC of the project to be bid.
10. To facilitate checking of Class "A" eligibility documents, prospective bidders who wish to participate in the public bidding may apply for registration with the AFP BAC, through the GHQ BAC1 Secretariat, as early as possible but not later than three (3) days prior to the schedule submission and opening of bids.
11. The AFP reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract without incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the AFP Bids and Awards Committee
G/F Bulwagang Syquio
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Contact Person: ***Ms. Edna B. Malonzo***
Tel. Nr: 911-6001 Loc 6486/6487
Fax Nr: 911-6001 Loc 6485
Email add: malonzo499@yahoo.com.ph

(Sgd.) RADM ALFREDO D ABUEG JR AFP
Chairman, GHQ BAC1

(PDI - June 26, 2007)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB No. III-07-001

PhilHealth Regional Office III (PRO III), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites registered and licensed security agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Procurement of Security Services
Location	PhilHealth Bldg., Lazatin Blvd., Dolores, City of San Fernando
Brief Description	Provision of 29 security guards to be deployed at PhilHealth Regional Office, Record Center and 10 PhilHealth Service Offices in Region III
Approved Budget for the Contract	Php 6,061,000.00
Contract Duration:	One (1) year
Delivery Period	Within 15 days after issuance of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 20 to July 2, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	July 2, 2007 at 1:30 PM
3. Opening of Bids	July 13, 2007 at 1:30 PM
4. Bid Evaluation	July 16 to July 20, 2007
5. Post-Qualification	July 23 to 27, 2007
6. Notice of Award	August 10, 2007

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 6,000.00 to the Cashier of PhilHealth Regional Office III.

(Sgd.) **PRISCILLA G. ASUNCION**
Outgoing BAC Chairman

(PDI - June 20 & 26, 2007)

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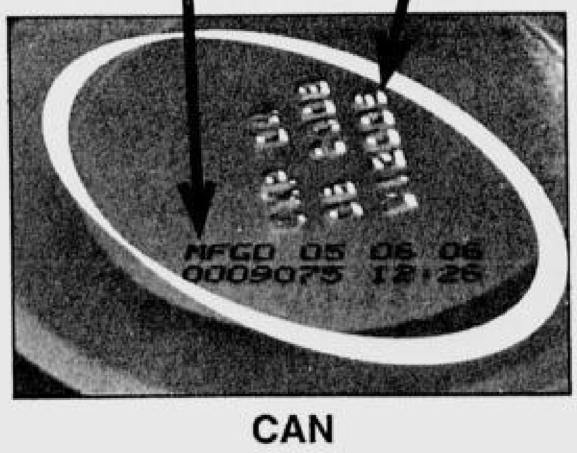
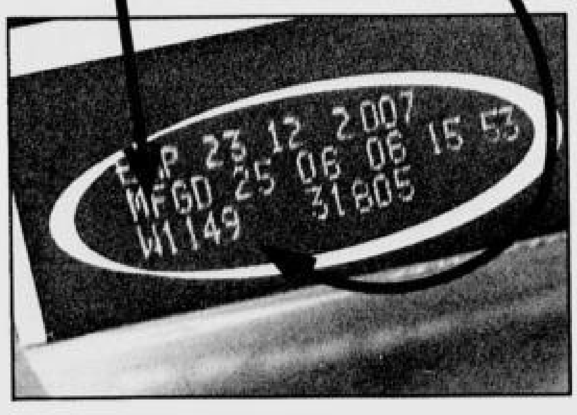
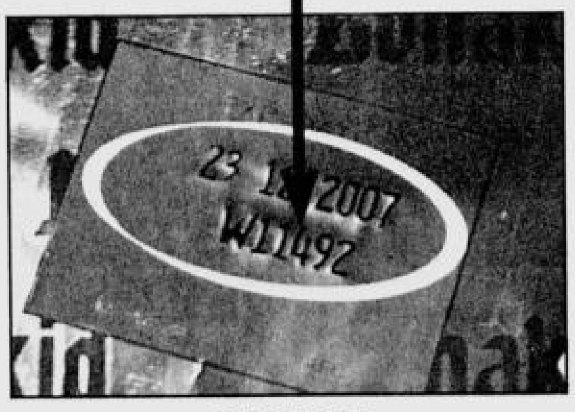

MANUFACTURING DATE (DD/MM/YY)*
LOT NO. (CONSUMER READABLE CODE)
MFGD 05 06 06
0009075 12:26

CAN


MANUFACTURING DATE (DD/MM/YY)*
LOT NO. (CONSUMER READABLE CODE)
EXP 23 12 2007
MFGD 25 06 06 15 53
W1149 31805

BOX FLAP


LOT NO. (CONSUMER READABLE CODE)
23 12 2007
W11492

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Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W1116	06-1116	05/16/06
W1126	06-1126	05/21/06
W1129	06-1129	05/22/06
W1130	06-1130	05/23/06
W1131	06-1131	05/23/06
W1132	06-1132	05/24/06
W1133	06-1133	05/24/06
W1134	06-1134	05/25/06
W1135	06-1135	05/26/06
W1136	06-1136	05/26/06
W1139	06-1139	06/21/06
W1141	06-1141	06/22/06
W1142	06-1142	06/22/06
W1143	06-1143	06/23/06
W1144	06-1144	06/23/06
W1146A	06-1146	06/24/06
W1147	06-1147	06/24/06
W1148	06-1148	06/24/06
W1149	06-1149	06/25/06
W1150	06-1150	06/25/06
W1151	06-1151	06/26/06
W1155	06-1155	06/27/06
W1158	06-1158	06/28/06
W1159	06-1159	06/29/06
W1160	06-1160	06/30/06
W1162	06-1162	06/30/06
W1163	06-1163	07/22/06
W1164	06-1164	07/22/06
W1166	06-1166	07/22/06
W1167	06-1167	07/23/06
W1168	06-1168	07/23/06
W1169	06-1169	07/23/06
W1170A	06-1170	07/24/06
W1171	06-1171	07/23/06
W1172	06-1172	07/24/06
W1173	06-1173	07/24/06
W1174	06-1174	07/24/06
W1175	06-1175	07/24/06
W1176	06-1176	07/25/06
W1177	06-1177	07/25/06
W1178	06-1178	07/26/06
W1179	06-1179	07/26/06
W1180	06-1180	07/26/06

BONAMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
50060854	50060854	10/19/05
50060855	50060855	10/20/05
50060856	50060856	10/21/05
50060857	50060857	10/24/05
W0055	06-0055	04/25/06
W0065	06-0065	05/01/06
W0078	06-0078	05/22/06
W0081	06-0081	05/23/06
W0082	06-0082	05/24/06
W0083	06-0083	05/25/06
W0084	06-0084	05/25/06
W0085	06-0085	05/25/06
W0102	06-0102	06/16/06
W0104	06-0104	06/17/06
W0105	06-0105	06/17/06
W0106	06-0106	06/19/06
W0107	06-0107	06/19/06
W0108	06-0108	06/20/06
W0109	06-0109	06/21/06

BONAMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W0110	06-0110	06/21/06
W01101	06-0110	06/22/06
W0111	06-0111	06/22/06
W0111A	06-0111	06/22/06
W0112	06-0112	06/22/06
W0113	06-0113	06/23/06
W0114	06-0114	06/23/06
W0115	06-0115	06/24/06
W0116	06-0116	06/25/06
W0117	06-0117	06/25/06
W0118	06-0118	06/25/06
W0120	06-0120	07/14/06
W0121	06-0121	07/15/06
W0122	06-0122	07/15/06
W0123	06-0123	07/15/06
W0124	06-0124	07/16/06
W0125	06-0125	07/16/06
W0126	06-0126	07/17/06
W0127	06-0127	07/17/06
W0128	06-0128	07/18/06
W0131	06-0131	07/19/06
W0133	06-0133	07/21/06
W0134	06-0134	07/21/06

BONNA™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W4133	06-4133	06/07/06
W4135	06-4135	06/08/06
W4138	06-4138	06/09/06
W4140	06-4140	06/11/06
W4143	06-4143	06/12/06
W4145	06-4145	06/13/06
W4151	06-4151	06/27/06
W4156	06-4156	06/29/06
W4160	06-4160	07/01/06
W4161	06-4161	07/01/06
W4162	06-4162	07/02/06
W4166	06-4166	07/09/06
W4167	06-4167	07/04/06
W4169	06-4169	07/05/06
W4170	06-4170	07/05/06
W4171	06-4171	07/06/06
W4172A	06-4172	07/07/06
W4174	06-4174	07/09/06
W4176	06-4176	07/10/06
W4177	06-4177	07/10/06
W4178	06-4178	07/11/06
W4179	06-4179	07/11/06
W4180	06-4180	07/12/06
W4181	06-4181	07/12/06
W4182	06-4182	07/13/06
W4183	06-4183	07/13/06

PROGRESS™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W12013	06-12013	06/09/06
W12014	06-12014	06/10/06
W12015	06-12015	06/10/06
W12016	06-12016	06/10/06
W12017	06-12017	06/11/06
W12018	06-12018	06/11/06
W12019	06-12019	06/11/06
W12020	06-12020	06/12/06

PROGRESS™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W12021	06-12021	06/13/06
W12022	06-12022	07/16/06
W12023	06-12023	07/17/06
W12024	06-12024	07/17/06
W12026	06-12026	07/18/06
W12027	06-12027	07/19/06
W12028	06-12028	07/19/06
W12029	06-12029	07/19/06
W12030	06-12030	07/19/06
W12032	06-12032	07/21/06

PROMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W8020	06-8020	07/25/06
W8021	06-8021	07/26/06
W8023	06-8023	07/26/06

PROMIL™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W2012	06-2012	07/12/06
W2013	06-2013	07/13/06
W2014	06-2014	07/14/06
W2015	06-2015	07/14/06
W2016	06-2016	07/14/06
W2017	06-2017	07/14/06
W2018	06-2018	07/14/06
W2021	06-2021	07/16/06
W2022	06-2022	07/16/06
W2025	06-2025	07/31/06

PROMIL™ KID

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W13034	06-13034	03/08/06
W13087	06-13087	06/14/06
W13088	06-13088	06/14/06
W13089	06-13089	06/15/06
W13090	06-13090	06/15/06
W13090A	06-13090	06/16/06
W13091	06-13091	06/16/06
W13092	06-13092	06/16/06
W13093	06-13093	06/16/06
W13094	06-13094	06/17/06
W13095	06-13095	06/17/06
W13096	06-13096	06/18/06
W13097	06-13097	06/18/06
W13099	06-13099	07/01/06
W13102	06-13102	07/02/06
W13105	06-13105	07/04/06
W13107A	06-13107	07/05/06
W13108	06-13108	07/05/06
W13109	06-13109	07/05/06
W13110	06-13110	07/06/06
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OPINION

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Money or life?

EDITORIAL

LAST WEEK, CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO SAID that the issue surrounding the Milk Code is not complex and should not take long to resolve. He said the Court would only have to rule on the constitutionality of the revised implementing rules and regulations of the code that would prohibit the advertisement, promotion or marketing of materials and activities for breast milk substitutes for infants up to two years old.

We hope that since, as the Chief Justice has said, the issue is simple, the Court will soon rule on the case as every day that passes that the new rules are not enforced could mean the death of hundreds of malnourished infants.

The Milk Code was signed into law in 1986 and the revised rules were issued in 2006, a gap of 10 years during which scientific knowledge about breast milk and infant formula vastly improved. The code covers only infants up to 12 months old, but the revised rules cover children up to 2 years old. It is this amendment that the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines, speaking on behalf of the US-based infant formula companies, is contesting.

Probably because of the aggressive advertising and promotional campaigns of the infant formula companies, exclusive breast-feeding rates for the first four to five months decreased from 20 percent in 1998 to 16 percent in 2003. There are no figures yet for 2004 to 2006, but the figure could be even lower now, given the busier lifestyles of Filipino women nowadays.

Ines Fernandez, executive director of Arugaan, said that about 16,000 babies die every year due to malnutrition. Howard Sobel, medical officer of the World Health Organization, for his part said that 10,000 deaths could have been avoided had infants been exclusively breast-fed in the first six months of life. He said formula-fed infants are 14 times more likely to die from diarrhea. But whether 10,000 or 16,000, these infant deaths are simply unacceptable. Babies should not die just because mothers mistakenly believe that infant formulas are an adequate substitute for breast milk during the first two years of their lives.

Felicitas Arroyo, PHAP lawyer, said at the Supreme Court hearing last week that the revised rules would cause the milk companies to lose P10 billion. But why, as Justice Angelina Sandoval Gutierrez countered, should the milk companies be more concerned about a decrease in their profits than the loss of babies' lives? Should corporate interests take precedence over infant health?

Multinational companies have apparently chosen the Philippines as the "battleground" for a legal dispute over milk substitutes because it is one of the most vulnerable countries. Using aggressive and sophisticated advertisements and promotions, these companies have created a big market for their products in the Philippines.

The Philippine government will not totally ban the sale of infant formula. It will be regulated only for infants up to the age of 2 because the first two years are the most vulnerable period of a baby's life. Even without the Milk Code it could be argued that the state has the police power to regulate the sale of food, including infant formula, that could affect people's health and lives.

More than 20 years of research have established that breast milk is perfectly suited to nourish infants and protect them from illness. The primary benefit of breast milk is nutritional; it contains the right amount of fatty acids, lactose, water and amino acids for human growth.

Breast-fed babies have fewer illnesses because human milk transfers to the infant a mother's antibodies to disease. Human milk straight from the breast is always sterile and uncontaminated. Nursing creates an early attachment between mother and child, and the baby enjoys a sense of security from the warmth and presence of the mother. And in a poor country like the Philippines, breast-feeding is definitely a cheaper way of nourishing infants than giving them infant formula.

But all these are forgotten because, according to a recent TV documentary, milk companies "with their sophisticated advertisements, clever promotions and persistent sales representatives " have convinced the public that powdered milk is a good choice for infant feeding. The marketing of infant formula is causing fewer mothers to breast-feed, including those who can ill afford artificial milk. With about 10,000 infant deaths every year due to malnutrition, it may not be farfetched to say, as the documentary does, that "the milk companies' formula for profits is a formula for disaster."

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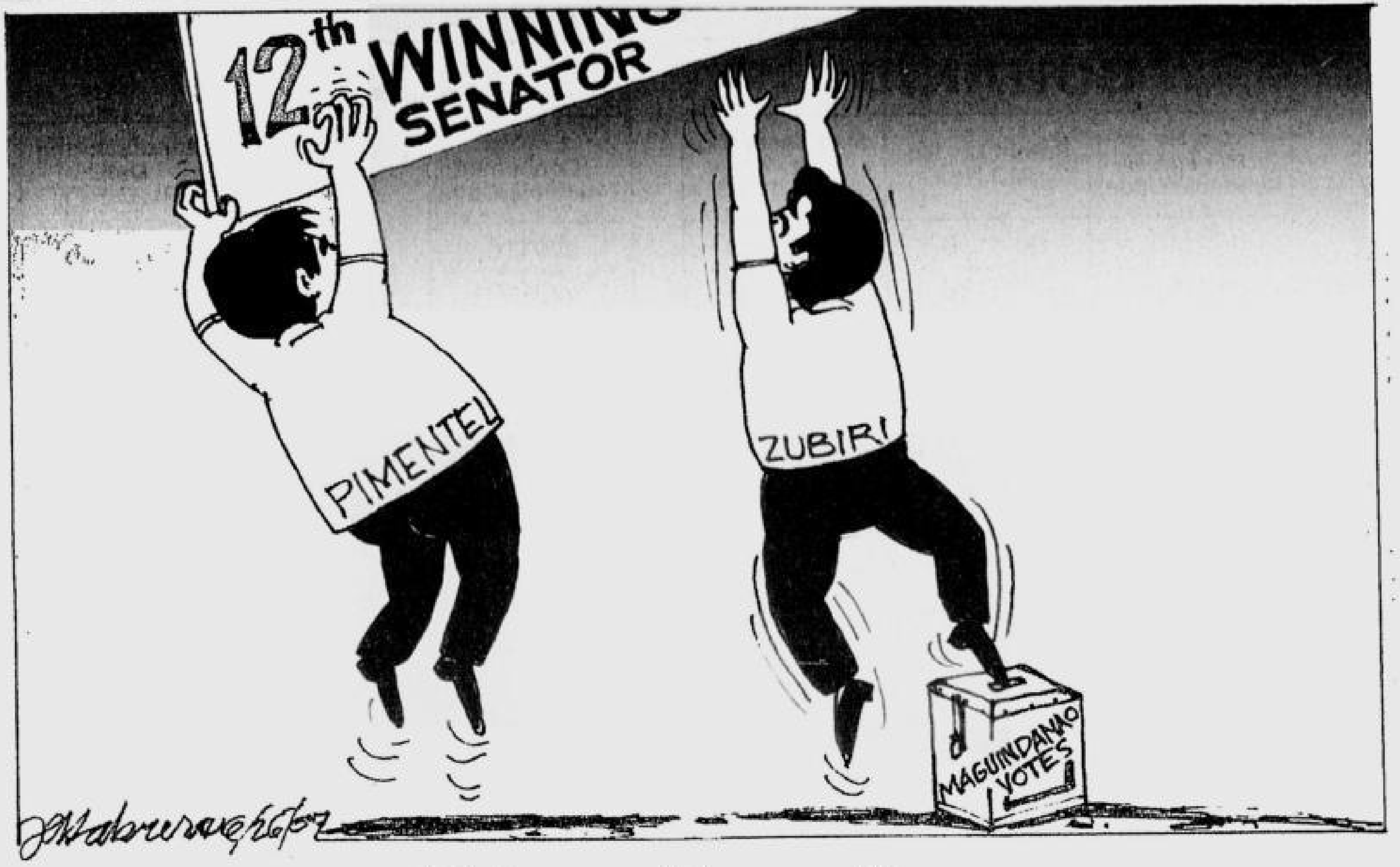

This week's mailbag

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"A FRIEND IN MANILA SENT ME YOUR column, 'Impunity's limits,' (INQUIRER, 5/22/07) on the abduction of Jonas Burgos and other desaparecidos," University of Kansas professor emeritus Grant Goodman e-mailed. "And I wept. It is so evocative of the tragedy of a country which I loved since I first set foot, in 1945, on the Santa Ana Racetrack ruins.

"My sorrow for what happened to Philippine society, in the last 60 years, is profound. A nobody Fulbright professor at UP in 1959, I worked at the rat-infested Arlegui warehouse while researching the Quezon Papers. Often, I was its sole occupant. And there was unforgettable Filipino hospitality—tea with President Carlos Garcia, breakfast with Sen. Fernando Lopez—plus Hotel Filipinas and the superb American Embassy library.

"Nostalgia has its limits But these moments in my life, so closely connected with the Philippines, were so full of hope for the country. Your column should be required reading for all Filipinos, let alone foreigners like myself."

"Sorry but you must update 'Inflicted pain as policy (2)'" (INQUIRER, 6/07/07), e-mailed Rosalinda Teves of Talamban, Cebu. The column trashed Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña for denying Lahug primary students classrooms because their parents voted "wrong." He evicted vendors from Cebu markets because they lived in Talisay, where his opponent governs.

"'Inflicted pain as policy (3)' should be on Osmeña's closure of the south bus terminal to hit Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia. 'I don't care if passengers alight 10 kilometers away because that land belongs to City Hall.'

"This is 'fire-aim-ready' governance. The Central Bank swapped that lot for provincial land in the 1970s, then-governor Eduardo Gullas reminded the mayor. Once again, Osmeña skewered the innocent."

Laguna's newest city of Calamba confirms what "Extra large begging bowl" (INQUIRER, 6/21/07) asserted: the frenzy to create new cities, from 60 in 1990 to 126 today, stems from lack of larger vision, writes former UN forester Napoleon Vergara.

"The national highway traverses Calamba from north to south. An east-west road slices into the city. And the crossing is chaos. No zoning, no planning! Result: a stew of shops, homes, bars, squatter shanties, sidewalk vendors—plus jeepneys and tricycles whose jockeys ignore traffic rules.

"In Calamba's center is a historical heirloom: Jose Rizal's home. But traffic gridlock has strangled the '60s to the '70s flow of tourists to a trickle. No one thinks of simple rules and infrastructure needed by a tourism program that'd have multiplier effects. Thus, local resort hotels that have hot-spring-fed swimming pools operate below potential.

"Other than bagging bigger IRA shares, few officials have a clue where their glorified barangay is now. Or where it's going. Nor have they the ability to convert vision into an implementable plan. But they have the temerity to call themselves cities!"

From Santa Clara, California, come these excerpts from housewife Bess' letter. She watches "Philippines Tonight" and "TV Patrol."

"Why do they keep showing old footage, like Abu Sayyaf rebels raising their guns, Manila slums, etc. while reporting the news?" she asks. "Are we Filipinos so dumb that we must be reminded what guerrillas or our slums look like? If they don't have any new pictures to show, then they shouldn't show any."

"What does a foreigner who flips to channel 8 see? Another bombing in Manila! We know those are dated footage. He doesn't. 'TV Patrol' even tosses in canned sound effects like an action movie. Can you blame foreigners for thinking the Philippines is on the brink of war!"

"Filipinos are not the only ones who watch these shows. They're aired in the US, Europe, Middle East and Asia, because we report in English. Our tourism department spends millions to promote our country abroad. Our news programs do exactly the opposite 24 hours a day—for free.

"Channel 69 airs news programs from Korea, Greece, Italy, Iran, Germany, France, Russia. Both Colombia and Mexico have more kidnappings. But compare the reporting styles. You may not understand everything they air. But you don't get traumatized from hysterical reporting.

"'Computerworld' and 'Offshoring Digest' claim our 'bad media image' is the single most problematic challenge that our software developers must overcome.' This false image negates our advantages. As the third largest English-speaking country, we have an edge over China, Thailand or Vietnam.

"A picture is worth a thousand words. But all you have on TV is the ugly. Media should report bad news. But it can be balanced. Italy has more pickpockets per capita. But Rai Uno does not air them every day. It doesn't hurt the ratings of 'Good Morning America' and 'NBC Today' to feature ordinary Americans who excelled.

"Can our networks portray role models? All our viewers see are crooked politicians and criminals. Yet, we have outstanding engineers, doctors, teachers, professors, nurses, etc. You don't get to know them from TV.

"We have no control over the next bombing or kidnapping by Abu Sayyaf, NPA or Jemaah Islamiyah. But we can do without sensationalized reporting that enable terrorists to spread fear.

"As a simple housewife, my English is far from perfect. But I did something by writing this letter. Now, what about you?"

(E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com)

'Law-kohan'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

JUAN PONCE ENRILE WEARS THE STERNLY benign face of law. The Senate can sign all the petitions it wants, he says, but in the end Antonio Trillanes' fate rests on the courts, not on them. "We are dealing with the separation of powers. When the court says no, there is nothing you can do about it."

His twin sister, Miriam Santiago, goes further. Trillanes' case, she says, is just like Romeo Jalosjos'. Jalosjos ran for public office and won but remained in jail. His victory was soon voided. 'Just because a prisoner has won as senator does not mean that she should be free to attend Senate sessions. That would be a violation of the equal protection clause of the Constitution."

That is all very well, except for several things.

First is that Ponce Enrile should be saying those things. Lest we forget, he was an architect of martial law and was Marcos' chief legal expert in that wise, or witlessness. Marcos, being a lawyer himself, was near-obsessed with finding a legal justification for his illegal usurpation of power and its murderous consequences, and employed a battery of lawyers, Enrile among them, for the purpose. He built an order dedicated to fomenting lawlessness by means of law. You see Enrile suddenly discovering the majesty of law, you can be sure it will be a travesty of justice.

Second is that it is not true at all that the courts of this country, probably with the sole, though luminous, exception of the Supreme Court, and only as shown by its recent pronouncements, are independent or constitute a bastion of the separation of powers. The courts insist on keeping Trillanes in the stockade, it will not be a sign of their dogged grit, it will be a sign of their slinking cowardice. It will not be a sign that they will not cave in to pressure, it will be a sign they have long given in to pleasure.

The one thing GMA's courts understand is not the force of law but the law of force. Look at those courts' determined efforts—with Ronaldo Puno flailing at them with a whip like a coachman does his horses—to oust a duly elected mayor in the form of Jojo Binay on grounds of corruption. Or look at those courts' determined efforts to jail Satur Ocampo, or send him to Leyte, whichever comes first or produces the worse result, on grounds of having morally blessed, if not actually participated in, the massacre of comrades there.

For some reason, neither the courts nor Congress have demanded the ouster or jailing of an unelected president who has turned the country into the most corrupt in Asia. For those two crimes, the courts and Congress have ruled to punish her by making her the longest-serving post-Edsa president. For some reason as well, neither the courts nor Congress have demanded the damnation or casting to hell of Norberto Gonzales and Jovito Palparan and their boss who, even as they were accusing Ocampo of a specious crime, were decimating this country's tribe of journalists and political activists. Forget morally blessed, their hand in it is direct and patent.

Respect the judgment of the Gloria courts in the case of Trillanes? Only in the same way we should have respected the judgment of the Macoy courts in the case of Ninoy. What's that grand phrase Miriam used, "equal protection clause of the Constitution"? Well, to paraphrase Imelda, some are more equal than others.

Third is that Trillanes' case is **not** like Jalosjos'. Jalosjos' sin is criminal, Trillanes' is political. Jalosjos was accused and convicted of rape, and of a minor at that. However you slice it, however the public itself rules about Jalosjos' qualifications to serve as public official, you cannot remove that blot on his person. By any moral standard, he remains despicable and deserves to rot in jail.

Trillanes was accused and convicted of mounting a coup against GMA. By all moral standards, other than the ones people like Enrile and Miriam discover when convenient, that is not a crime, that is a service to the nation. That does not deserve jail, that deserves a medal. That is not beyond the pale of the people, the ultimate arbiter of law and justice in a democracy, to set aright.

If trying to overthrow a government automatically deserves jail, then neither Enrile nor Miriam should be enjoying the fruits of freedom and afflicting us with their notions of law. Enrile was one of those who rebelled against Marcos, though unlike Trillanes who openly defied authority, he simply holed up in Camp Aguinaldo after being discovered to be plotting against his former patron. And Miriam was one of those who openly called for the mob during the so-called Edsa III to "*sugod, sugod*" Malacañang after her former patron, ravisher of the nation but lavisher of largesse to friends, was ousted by an act of people power. In fact, she openly defied the efforts to arrest her, putting a gun on a table in front of the cameras and daring the law enforcers—a monumental misnomer, "law" and "enforcer"—to haul her ass away.

"Equal protection of the Constitution"? Well, if only by the law that heaven is kind to fools and drunks, Miriam should remain free to torment this country. Some people are more brain-damaged than others. Some nations are, too.

But in the end, I don't mind if they keep Trillanes in jail. Because if the open disgust of the AFP rank-and-file at their superiors, as shown by their defiance of orders to not make Trillanes win, and the open support of the people for Malacañang's scourge, as shown by their shoving a well-known coup plotter into the Senate, are anything to go by, Enrile, Miriam and their boss may yet know law in all its thunderous righteousness before very long.

Keep him in jail, and this country may yet know freedom.

Nelly Villafuerte's coping produces a helpful book

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SENATE SEEMS TO BE IN THE SAME predicament as the House of Representatives in that the two top leadership contenders come from the same coalition. In the House, the main contenders are Speaker Jose de Venecia and Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia both of the administration coalition. The two rivals for the Senate presidency, Sen. Manuel Villar and Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., are both from the opposition.

Under the rules of both chambers, whoever comes out as the second-highest candidate automatically becomes the minority leader. In the House, the prospect of Garcia ending up as minority leader is frowned upon by the opposition, who rightly feel it should be Rep. Ronaldo Zamora or Rep. Carlos Padilla. I imagine that as the opening of Congress nears, there will be frantic efforts to make Garcia withdraw. In the Senate, however, efforts of the 13-member opposition to come up with one candidate for the top post have failed so far, so it's possible that the minority leader could also be from the same coalition as the Senate chief.

* * *

The reason for this rather unusual situation, as Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile noted, is presidential ambition. Three Liberal Party senators have said they would support Pimentel, and that they may be joined by two other senators. Their reason obviously is that the aging minority leader would pose no threat to Sen. Mar Roxas, the LP's bet for 2010, who'll assume the party's leadership this November. On the other hand, LP independent Francis Pangilinan is supporting his fellow Wednesday Club member, Villar, who's a major threat to Roxas' presidential ambitions as well as to Sen. Panfilo Lacson's own.

* * *

The contest between Villar and Pimentel presents a real dilemma for the opposition. If all 13 opposition senators were to unite and vote for one candidate, the chamber is theirs to control. But if Villar fails to get the votes of all his 12 opposition colleagues, he would need votes from administration senators to win, which won't be good for the opposition senators, especially since majority of them have signed a pact to remain independent and give it some headaches. For example, Lacson wants to revive the Pidal hearings and grab the blue ribbon Committee, while Trillanes wants to look into the "extra-judicial" killings.

It's hard to decide which chamber leadership fight is more interesting at this point.

* * *

In the recent elections, Monetary Board member Nelly Favis Villafuerte, former trade undersecretary for the international sector, was caught in a most unenviable situation: how to position herself in the bitter political fight between her husband, reelectionist Rep. Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, and her son, reelectionist Gov. LRay Villafuerte. It appeared that the elder Villafuerte, president of Kampi which is part of the administration coalition, wanted his son to run under Kampi instead of under Lakas, but the young man refused. Nelly said that as wife and mother, she had to find a way to cope with the bruising battle between two people she loved.

What did she do? Staying away from politics, Nelly turned to writing a handbook which should help everyone who wants to know all about microfinance. Last April 1, barely two weeks from the start of the local campaign period, she finished the book. What an incredible coping mechanism this brilliant lady, who was senior valedictorian of the UP College of Law Class '59 and 7th placer in the 1959 bar exams, has shown us all. Congratulations, Nelly.

* * *

In her 430-page "Microfinance: Handbook (Philippines)," her third book, Villafuerte writes about a field that is "no longer a footnote, but a world-wide movement" for poverty alleviation, based on the highly successful and pioneering Grameen Bank experiment in Bangladesh. Today, that experiment by US-trained economist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, which began with his extending loans totaling $27 to 42 people in 1976, has been replicated in more than 100 countries around the world. The handbook is complete with all the laws and regulations in this field. It gives interested people all the information they need on interest rates for microfinance loans, major international donor agencies, government regulatory agencies, the major players here among the NGOs and credit cooperatives, the microfinance-oriented banks, and directories of stakeholders, etc. It answers queries such as: "Can beggars qualify as borrowers of microfinance loans?" "Can minors organize a cooperative?" "What is the maximum loan one can borrow?" How does our microfinance industry compare with those of other countries in terms of growth?" It also tackles complex and cut-and-dried topics, but the success stories such as that of Dr. Aristotle Alip's pioneering Center for Agriculture & Rural Development Inc., are dealt with in a newsy and even folksy style.

* * *

Villafuerte points out that "the development, growth and promotion of microfinance in the Philippines is moving at a rapid pace. We are not behind other countries." But to hasten its growth, President Macapagal-Arroyo, last Jan. 4, 2007, issued Memorandum Order 238, which designated Presidential Management Staff Director-General Cerge M. Remonde as the "Oversight Official for the Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs)." Villafuerte notes that policy-makers, regulators, practitioners and advocates of microfinance have been "continuously making improvements, new policies; overhauling its credit delivery mechanisms; redesigning various saving-related products; updating the performance standards, and creating innovative programs to serve the poorest of the poor."

I personally have been very interested in this field for a long time now, for I see it as the best and quickest way to alleviate the crippling poverty of our people. This is why this new handbook, which began as a loving woman's coping mechanism, is heaven-sent. It's like a one-stop shop. Grab it.

India's new caste politics

WORLD VIEW

Pradipta Chaudhury

CASTE, ONCE AGAIN, IS CASTING ITS SHADOW over India's politics. Caste-based "reservations" (reserved places) in education and government employment are supposed to benefit India's most deprived, but in reality they have hardened, rather than eroded, India's ancient system of discrimination.

Every now and then, particularly before elections, caste groups demand to be placed on the list of "other backwards classes" (OBCs), in order to benefit from these reservations. Indeed, nowadays, political parties dangle the carrot of reservations to more and more castes, and even promise to extend the policy to admissions into elite educational institutions and the private sector.

Many consider India's increasing mobilization along caste lines a welcome assertion of "identity." Indeed, intellectuals and politicians of all varieties almost unanimously hail the politics of caste identity as a move toward true equality. Some go so far as to argue that the recent rise of the lower castes in northern Indian politics and the implementation of reservations by the central government amount to a silent revolution, and that the politics of caste is secular and a bulwark against religious sectarianism.

Public policy, however, should be based on evidence and logic, not glib sociological babble. Whether caste is a good indicator of socioeconomic deprivation remains an unsettled issue. Indeed, the protagonists of caste politics and caste-based public policy simply cannot validate their assertions, offering only small-sample surveys that can be grossly misleading in the context of a huge country characterized by monumental diversity. Moreover, these studies typically pool castes into three large groups, which distort the real picture.

Since India gained its independence, the government has systematically refused to collect sufficient data on the socioeconomic aspects of caste. The huge mass of evidence available in the censuses and land revenue settlement reports of the period from 1901 to 1931 lies ignored. If caste is a good indicator of deprivation now, it should have been even clearer in the past. But statistical analysis of this evidence—the only accessible macro-level quantitative data for the whole country—does not confirm caste as a clear indicator of deprivation.

For example, less than one-third of workers in this period followed their traditional caste occupations. Workers belonging to each caste pursued a wide variety of occupations, although agriculture provided the bulk of employment. Each caste contained a varying mixture of landless laborers, cultivators, and landlords. While some castes concentrated on one, others were equally involved in a number of occupations. Access to literacy and to jobs in the government sector and modern professions was limited to a small section of the population usually belonging to the high castes.

Access to land was uneven. Farmers, the single largest occupational group in most castes, with ritual rank ranging from high to low, were highly differentiated in terms of size and economic status. The size of holdings was similar for most upper castes and some lower castes. Thus, the economic status of households varied a great deal within each caste.

In any case, the majority of peasants belonging to any caste, upper or lower, were poor. In many castes of low ritual rank, landlords, prosperous cultivators and traders were found, some of whom actually paid income tax.

Consider the average economic position of the members of each caste in this sample. Generally, most high-ranking castes occupied high economic positions, and the majority of the "untouchable" castes were confined to the lowest economic positions. In some regions, some lower castes occupy higher economic positions than high castes.

The most obvious fact in the data is the great disparity in the economic positions of castes sharing the same ritual rank. Such differences are particularly acute for middle-ranking castes, which are now called OBCs, and are observed in all parts of India. Even among the untouchables, some castes have higher economic status than others.

Among the middle-ranking, agricultural castes, some had high economic status due to improved agriculture, brought about by canal irrigation and commercialization. Most other cultivating and artisan castes, enjoying similar ritual ranks as the financially more successful group, occupied much lower economic positions, which resulted in an amazing degree of heterogeneity among backward castes. In some regions, the lowest economic positions were occupied by some "backward" castes, not by untouchables.

Hence, caste has not been an indicator of material deprivation, even during the early decades of the 20th century. But boosters of caste politics claim that it is not economic deprivation but the social backwardness from which these castes have historically suffered that makes caste reservations necessary.

In fact, the whole population of the lower castes did not suffer from an equal degree of ritual handicap. Historically, the rich in each low caste emulated the customs and rituals of the upper castes, such as child marriage, the payment of dowries, and prevention of widows remarrying. Sometimes, well-off sections of low castes broke away to form new castes and managed to achieve higher ritual status. Usually a prosperous caste succeeded in raising its rank in the ritual hierarchy.

By using caste as a criterion in public policy, India's government is effectively treating the rich and the poor equally, thereby conveying benefits to the former. This helps co-opt the elite among the lower castes to the ruling coalition, and keeps the poor divided along caste lines. But it is hypocritical to argue that this does anything to eliminate poverty.

Project Syndicate

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Children of Frenchmen

WORLD VIEW

Jean-Paul Fitoussi and Éloi Laurent

ONE PUZZLING AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED feature of the France that elected Nicolas Sarkozy as its new president is its mix of private optimism and public pessimism.

Consider this: France has the highest fertility rate in the European Union (just under two children per woman), even ahead of booming Ireland. Of course, that rate alone is not enough to sustain France's current population, but it's far stronger than its European neighbors and almost equal to that of the United States. Yet, despite this, Eurobarometer polls repeatedly show that the French are the most pessimistic of all Europeans when it comes to their country's future. How can it be that a people who are so negative about their common future as a nation go about confidently building their private futures within their families?

Indeed, strained by decades of governmental failure to curb massive unemployment, the French are nowadays often perceived as having retired from the political sphere to concentrate on their lives and leisure. Museums, gardening, clubs of all sorts are blossoming in today's France. Private associations, it seems, have picked up where political parties and trade unions have left off.

But if the French have turned their backs on the public sphere, how are we to make sense of the record-high participation in the recent presidential election, when more than 85 percent of voters turned out to vote in both rounds? How do we explain the passion aroused by the campaign and by Sarkozy himself, including the massive affirmation he received in the parliamentary election?

Political fervor, it seems, has not vanished in the land of Rousseau and Danton. So the truth must lie elsewhere: the French are not hopeless about politics; they are simply waiting for a genuine leader.

As a matter of fact, a case can be made that the French will never come to believe that the state lacks power, globalization or no globalization. The French still expect greater things from their government than from an integrated Europe or the boundless world.

Yes, the French are incorrigible lovers of the welfare state (they are not the only ones). And Sarkozy seems to understand this instinctively. His agenda appears to aim at domestic liberalization—moving beyond the 35-hour week, ending the special pension regimes accorded to particular professions, increasing incentives to work and gain wealth. But it also seeks protection from the dizzying effects of globalization, which probably will mean strong support for the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, skepticism toward further trade liberalization and the will to improve European Union's economic government.

Nevertheless, precisely because they care about the future of their numerous children, the French are much more amenable to some wise reforms than most commentators (and politicians) generally assume. Secondary and higher education are rightly near the top of the agenda list of the new government. But so are measures aimed at harnessing the state to efforts to encourage entrepreneurship and boost economic dynamism such as public guaranties for housing and startups, and fiscal rebate for investment in small enterprises.

France is also in desperate need of a reality check on the nature of its current cultural diversity. And no one should forget that, despite his campaign rhetoric and his apparent unpopularity with many immigrants, Sarkozy himself is an immigrant's son who favors bold affirmative action policies. Besides, the nomination of a woman with a North-African ascent as minister of justice made that clear from the start.

Most French understand that their public spaces—the labor market, the workplace, housing, and educational institutions—are corroded by discrimination. France's impoverished suburbs, the notorious *banlieues*, make the ideal of *fraternité* sound like an insult on top of an injury. There is no greater task for Sarkozy than to open, from the inside, all doors to the offspring of others who, like his father, immigrated to France.

So make no mistake about it. Sarkozy has not been elected to adapt France to an elusive globalization. His mandate is much more demanding: he must reconcile France's public interests with its private passions.

Project Syndicate

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Feeling like a winner

YOUNG BLOOD

Joseph Jadway D. Marasigan

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE MAY 14 ELECTIONS GAVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO see up close the structure of our society and understand better why our country is in crisis and why corruption has become systemic. Against the advice of friends, I entered what they described as the "dirty" world of politics by running for the municipal council of Sariaya, Quezon, under the Liberal Party. I decided to run on the expectation that at least the exercise would give a first-hand experience of society's own impulses, which would be useful for my profession as a teacher. Indeed, the 45 days of campaigning brought me face to face with many realities about our society that no textbook can tell me.

Every morning as I started my day, I faced a queue of people with a variety of requests, mostly requesting for medical or burial assistance and occasionally for money to buy a gallon of *lambanog* (coconut wine). Once while I was waiting for my turn to speak during a caucus, a woman approached me to ask for cash so she could pay her unpaid electric bills for two months. When I passed a group of young men playing basketball, they would let me know that they needed uniforms and a ball.

On board my motorcycle, I went to every barrios like a traveling preacher carrying a message of hope to anyone who cared to listen. I told my audience I would not play the game of patronage. If I did that just to get elected, I explained to them, I would be spending the next three years trying to recover whatever I spent during the campaign.

But that was not good enough for some voters. Their needs were immediate and short-term. They demanded cash. They could not think in terms of institutions. They felt contented once they have extracted from a politician any sum they needed to feed their children at least for a day. They hardly cared how the leaders they would elect would spend their three years in office.

There is perhaps no other country where a senatorial candidate spends something like P180 million to run a decent campaign for a position that pays only P65,000 a month. Whether he spends his own money or someone else's, it is certain that he will to try to recover every centavo of it. And since there is no legal way of doing so, he will have to do that through illegal means. And this is where corruption starts.

This is a big problem because it is so intimately connected to our political system. We have a very high level of corruption for the simple reason that our elections are so expensive. What we have are elections in which there is every little possibility for serious nation builders to emerge as leaders.

Why do we keep electing bad leaders? At the heart of the leadership crisis is the highly unequal distribution of wealth and power. In such a situation, there is a breakdown in the structure of opportunity and there is very little hope for people who live in the poor rural areas to advance. That is why people feel so hopeless. Most of our people remain poor and powerless, and they look for leaders who can give them burial and medical assistance and protection from oppressors and exploiters.

If we didn't have a highly unequal society, we would not be electing bad leaders. We will not have leaders who do not have the sense of proportion which, sociologist Max Weber has identified as one of the criteria for those considering a career in politics.

I think we may be able to end the rule of *trapos* when the poor have become self-reliant and when they can obtain justice and protection through formal legal institutions. The problem, however, is how to get to that stage of economic sufficiency and political equality. We need leaders with a vision of transforming a society that preserves inherited privilege, that deprives the many of opportunity, that promotes the economic and political dependency of the *masa*, and that strips the poor of their self-esteem and sense of hope.

We need leaders who can teach our people. Education is so important because it is often the only hope for the poor to get out of their poverty. The leaders we elect must use education to rebuild our society's structure of opportunity.

When they came, I was not surprised by the results of the election which found me outside the winners' circle. But I derived some satisfaction from the thought that I had not bought a single vote or paid any leader or catered to any vested interest or made false claims. I talked sense and concentrated on issues and offered my own vision and program of government. The candidate who landed first obtained more than 14,000 votes. But each of the 6,000 votes I obtained were the votes of the people who could not be swayed by *lambanog* or influenced by free cigarettes. Other candidates, who resorted to dirty and illegal tricks to get elected, might also have the same kind of voters but perhaps these candidates didn't have the capacity to distinguish between the corruptible and incorruptible voters. It is in this context that I say that I felt like I had won. Together with the 6,000 untainted voters, Maybe we can begin a movement to practice principled politics in our town.

Joseph Jadway D. Marasigan, 23, is a sociology instructor at Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation Candelaria Inc. in Candelaria, Quezon, and an alumnus of the Ayala Young Leaders Congress. He is studying for his master's degree in sociology at the the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

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THEY SAID

Educated unemployed

"The sad reality is that despite the growing demand for skilled workers in various technical and vocational fields, many Filipinos remain unemployed. Regrettably, a lot of these young unemployed Filipinos have college degrees; they have college diplomas in areas that have no employment value."

—*Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, pushing for tech-voc programs to match thousands of jobs available in these fields*

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Teachers should get higher salaries, more benefits

WITH THE OPENING OF THE NEW SCHOOL year, the Filipino public school teacher, the "work carabao" of the government, is back in harness.

This year, around half a million public school teachers trooped back to the classroom to mold the minds of some 20 million pupils and students in elementary and high schools nationwide. Aside from their classroom duties, they have to attend to a myriad of other community work, like the gathering of data on the health and living conditions of their pupils, this after the nerve-wracking and exhausting 24-hour poll assignment they just went through last May.

Yet they are underpaid; in effect, they subsidize public school education, each to the tune of at least P130,000 a year—all together, about P65 billion a year, or P500 billion since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assumed the presidency.

Worse, they are deprived of decent retirement benefits—the government merely advances in lump sum the equivalent of the teacher's three-to-five years pay, upon retirement, before he/she gets a measly monthly pension of P10,000 on the average.

Compare the teachers' retirement benefits to the congressman's and senator's yearly pork barrel of P70 million and P200 million, respectively, a thick slice of which ends up in you-know-where. (Don't forget other funds, such as the P720-million fertilizer fund which bandit-congressmen pocketed to support Ms Arroyo's presidential bid in the fraudulent 2004 presidential elections.) Or to the multi-million-peso retirement benefits of the officials of the GSIS, SSS, Pagcor, PCSO and other government-owned corporations.

PHILIPPINE DAILY LETTERS INQUIRER

The unconscionable exploitation of public school teachers must end. The teachers should be paid a just basic, monthly salary of at least P25,000, exclusive of allowances, to enable them to live a dignified life, in keeping with their noble profession.

No less than the Constitution ordains the total liberation of the Filipino teachers who have been treated like dirt and as beasts of burden by monumentally corrupt administrations.

The incoming 14th Congress and the President have a constitutional and moral duty to immediately pass and approve laws increasing the monthly salaries, allowances, retirement and other benefits of the Filipino public school teacher.

Our teachers deserve no less. They are the nation's real martyrs who dedicate and sacrifice their lives, talents and personal happiness in the service of the Filipino people.

—JOE SOLIMAN,
president,
Kilusan sa Pagtatanggol
ng Konstitusyon,
Karapatang Pangtao
at mga Kalayaang Sibil,
685 Rizal Ave., Barangay San Agustin,
Malabon City

UPHOLD CLEAN and HONEST ELECTIONS! BATAAN PARTYLIST
KABATAAN
NATIONAL DISGRACE

STUDENT militants hold a demonstration against Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Cabinet revamp should start with Gonzalez's dismissal

I AGREE WITH GOVERNOR BEN Evardone that the time has really come for President Macapagal-Arroyo to reorganize her Cabinet and get rid of the deadwood and rusty anchors that only serve to pull down her administration.

The President can turn the May 14, 2007 political disaster (for her administration) into an opportunity and give her administration added buoyancy and better credibility by that simple expedient act.

Number one on her list should be Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. This rabid loyalist of the President only succeeds in hurting her administration each time he opens his mouth.

The Arroyo presidency will undoubtedly experience greater stability and better image once Gonzalez is shown the exit door.

—MANUEL P. MEJORADA,
provincial administrator, Iloilo,
boymejo@gmail.com

Goodbye to UP's 'Iskolar ng Bayan'

THE JUNE 8 INQUIRER ISSUE CARRIED THE news story "Filipino delivers Harvard Law graduation speech." It told about Filipino Oscar Franklin Tan earning the privilege of delivering the commencement address for Class 2007 of the Harvard Law School. What was striking to me, as a UP graduate and as a current UP professor, were the last two paragraphs in the Web version of the story which was not mentioned in the print version of the June 9, 2007 Philippine Daily Inquirer:

"But underlying all these lofty plans—now all within his reach, thanks to his 'overprized Harvard diploma'—is a rather humble mission for someone who got his head start in law at a state university like UP.

"'Our studies were paid for by nameless poor farmers and fishermen, and I hope to one day pay my dues,' Tan said."

Tan's statement recognizes and affirms his being an "Iskolar ng Bayan," meaning UP education is subsidized to a large extent by the taxpayers, and a UP graduate has an obligation to pay back that subsidy through service to the nation.

With the 300-percent tuition increase in UP starting this June 2007, the freshies in UP campuses in Luzon are paying an average of P21,000 per semester, a far cry from the average P8,000 per semester that new UP students paid prior to the increase.

The full data on the number of 2007 UPCAT passers who actually enrolled in UP and on their socio-economic profile are still out. But UP students who are paying tuition almost as high as that of UST and about two-thirds of that of Ateneo cannot be the "iskolar ng bayan" that UP alumni proudly call themselves.

As the UP Administration of President Emerlinda R. Roman continues to implement policies and programs that are in line with neo-liberal policies on education pushed by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank and the Presidential Committee on Educational Reform (PCER) which call for intensified revenue-generation of state universities and colleges, Tan's statement on paying the dues owed to nameless farmers and fisherfolk might as well be the valedictory for UP's "Iskolar ng Bayan."

—JUDY M. TAGUIWALO,
associate professor,
Department of Women
and Development Studies,
College of Social Work
and Community Development,
University of the Philippines,
Diliman, Quezon City

Baseless insult to US

THIS IS A REJOINDER TO ROD Tajon's June 20 letter using the phrase "US-Arroyo administration."

Tajon used that insult deliberately in his attempt to paint the United States of America in a bad light. Well, he's welcome to his own opinion. But Tajon slung his mud against America and then failed to back up his accusation with even just one single substantive point.

His whole letter criticized the Arroyo administration; he said nothing about the United States, except for the above-mentioned slur.

Isn't it a basic letter-composition practice to state one's point and then back it up with at least one supporting statement? Even better, several points of proof are necessary to make readers nod their heads in agreement.

If Tajon wishes to rail against America, he should state some clear, concise facts to back up his wild accusations that the United States is aiding the extrajudicial killings for which Filipinos are purely to blame.

—WES WRIGHT,
Angeles City

GSIS scored for 'anomalous' policy of not paying back 'forfeited' contributions

I AM A VICTIM OF AN ANOMALOUS policy of the Government Service Insurance System.

I was employed as rural health physician of Agutaya, Palawan from Dec. 8, 2004 to Feb. 1, 2007. As a government employee, my monthly contribution to the GSIS was P1,780.37. This remained so until January 2006, when it was raised to P1,874.07 per month. I had two years and two months of government service and as a member of the GSIS, my total contributions reached P47,507.70.

When I surrendered my policy on May 31, 2007 at the GSIS Palawan Branch they paid me P1,378.43 as the cash surrender value of my policy.

Last June 6, I went to the GSIS main office at the CCP Complex in Pasay City to claim my benefits but, to my dismay, I was told that I was not entitled to any benefit, not even a refund of my contributions because I did not reach three years of service, which is required by a GSIS policy. This is anomalous because, when we were enrolled as GSIS members, we were not told about such policy. I'm sure I am not the only victim of this policy.

May I ask Mr. Winston Garcia, what does GSIS do with the "forfeited" contributions of members like me. Do they go to the pockets of private individuals? I do hope to hear from him soonest.

—HONORIO T. BALASOTE, MD

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3 generals urged to come out in the open

From page A1

Among them were officers in charge of operations, intelligence and civil-military relations, according to the informant.

The three INQUIRER informants requested that their names not be published.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said he suspected one of the generals who took part in the discussions was Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, commanding general of the Philippine Army.

"It does not take a Sherlock Holmes to know when and where that command conference was held and who attended," Casiño said in a statement.

"Everybody knows Tolentino headed Nolcom (Northern Luzon Command) at that time and among his henchmen was the President's favorite general, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan."

ARMY Chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino.

Probe urged

Casiño, whose group had lost 131 members to political killings since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001, urged Malacañang to suspend Tolentino and have him investigated.

"It is Ms Arroyo's duty, as Commander in Chief, to spearhead a swift, full-blown, no-holds-barred investigation based on the information given to media by three of her generals," he said.

The INQUIRER sought Tolentino's reaction but it was Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres who released a statement for the Army.

Torres said the Army doubted the existence of the "alleged whistle-blower generals."

"The generals that we have are brave enough to stand and face the consequences of their words and deeds. They do not hide behind the cloud of anonymity," Torres said.

The Army appealed to the public to be "more discerning with the information coming their way."

Ms Arroyo's favorite

"Some of the information (is) designed to sow divisiveness in the ranks and weaken the very organization whose members have offered their lives for the protection of the Filipino people," Torres said.

Tolentino, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1974, was once described by former Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor as a "known fighter the President is really fond of."

The human rights group Karapatan has listed at least 400 victims of political killings in Luzon alone since 2001.

"If it is true that a command conference of Luzon commanders took place, then the number of deaths will show that the conference, indeed, adopted the policy of extrajudicial killings," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes.

AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro called on the three anonymous generals to come out with their allegations "so that these can be investigated."

An AFP concern

"Let's put a face to these allegations so that these would have some credibility," Bacarro told reporters.

He said that unless there was a "face" to these allegations and pending the result of a verification ordered by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., the military would treat the reports as just "rumors that could be manufactured by some interest groups with the intent of destroying the AFP."

Bacarro stressed the military was not ignoring the report as this was a "concern" for the AFP which wanted to clear its name.

He said this was why the military was conducting a verification and this was a "tedious process."

"If ever it will be proven that they (the generals) exist, then we will see if they have committed certain violations pertaining to their airing of their statements or grievances," he said.

Malacañang dismissed the claims of the unnamed generals.

Clear policy

But Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Malacañang supported a summit being initiated by the Supreme Court to review rules that would help curb the killings of militants.

"We do not comment on speculations and anonymous and thus unverifiable information," Bunye said.

"The administration has a clear policy condemning cold-blooded murders and other crimes," Bunye said.

Bunye also said: "Let me reiterate that we support all measures that will finally bring to an end these extrajudicial killings and I've said that we support the special summit that's being proposed by the Supreme Court so let's all work together to put an end to these (killings)."

Bacarro also said that the military was "more than willing to cooperate to whatever proceedings that will happen in this summit."

The Philippine National Police said it was willing to join such a summit.

PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon said all sectors involved must come together and get a better perspective of killings.

Generals must come out

Senators urged the generals with knowledge of the military's role in political killings to come out.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the three anonymous generals "should follow the lead of Gen. (Francisco) Gudani who went to the Senate and divulged what he knew about cheating."

Gudani is currently facing court-martial for appearing in the Senate in defiance of Ms Arroyo's orders and testifying about alleged cheating during the 2004 presidential elections.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the revelation by the generals, albeit unnamed, had bolstered the findings of the Melo Commission, the human rights arm of the United Nations and the European Commission that the AFP or some of its elements could be held responsible either as perpetrators or for their inability to stop these killings.

"If these three generals love the AFP and their country, they must come to the open and provide necessary information that will allow the government to adopt corrective measures," said Biazon. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Alcuin Papa*

Cell phones more precious than wedding rings—Nokia

From page A1

A recent study by Nokia has found that people are becoming more emotionally attached to their cell phones.

"A phone is more than just a piece of technology—you take it everywhere, tell it intimate things and it can even reflect your mood and personality," the study said.

Incorporating the findings of a study on human behavior into the design of cell phones partly explains people's emotional connection to the hand-held communication device.

The mobile phones that Nokia creates do not attempt to father the next "in thing" but are dictated by the needs of people and their drive to communicate, Rhys Newman, senior design manager of Nokia Innovation and Insight, said during the annual Nokia Connection event here last week.

"We try and prioritize concepts which are relevant to the people. Once we have an understanding of what, how and why people are communicating, we start to design," he said in an interview with reporters.

Streets of China

Concepts that have been used in a phone feature, application or design may have been an idea picked up from the streets of China, on the outskirts of Uganda or the home of an illiterate family in India.

The mobile giant has been spending millions of euros sending its design research team of more than 250 people to various countries to understand human behavior, hoping to find ideas on how a communication device could meet a global market demand with different cultures, lifestyles and languages.

Shadowing people

Jan Chipchase, Nokia's human behavioral researcher, who went to more than 15 countries in 2006 alone "shadowing" people—or "stalking with permission" as he called it—has a treasure trove of trivia gathered from his studies and research.

"Shadowing can tell you things that people do. We go out there and try to capture what is in a day in the life [of ordinary people]. We observe the little details of life," Chipchase said.

For instance, he noted how groups of people dining in restaurants always divided among themselves the last piece of food at the end of the meal.

"Nobody takes the whole thing. The object has a half-life. [That] could apply to how people share the digital contents of their cell phones," Chipchase said during a media presentation.

Women miss incoming phone calls more than men because they prefer to keep their mobile phones in their handbags, his team's study also found.

Women miss incoming calls

Sixty-one percent of the women keep their phones in their bags while 60 percent of the men carry their phones in their trousers' right pocket, Chipchase said.

Men who carry their phones in a belt pouch tell something about their age or their waist size—they are usually old, said the Tokyo-based anthropologist.

"This shift can also be explained by an increase in waist sizes over time for males making pockets a less feasible destination," Chipchase said on his website.

Straps

While mobile straps are a trend in some Asian countries (South Korea, China and Japan), the idea appears absurd in Los Angeles and New York.

One possible explanation for this, Chipchase noted, could be that using straps among consumers in "collectivist societies" was one "obvious way of projecting oneself and one's values."

These findings—based on a study Chipchase's team conducted on phone carrying and personalization between 2003 and 2006 in 10 locations—could be used in coming up with new cell phone designs.

New phone features to address the high missing incoming calls among women and the convenience of having a strap attached to the phones could be developed from these findings, he said.

A total of 1,549 respondents were interviewed for the study that was conducted in Milan, New York City, Los Angeles, Teheran, Kampala, New Delhi, Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing and Jilin.

The finding that one of every five cell phone users would rather lose his or her wallet, credit cards or wedding ring than his or her unit came from a survey of 5,500 people aged between 18 and 35 in early 2006. The survey was conducted in 11 countries.

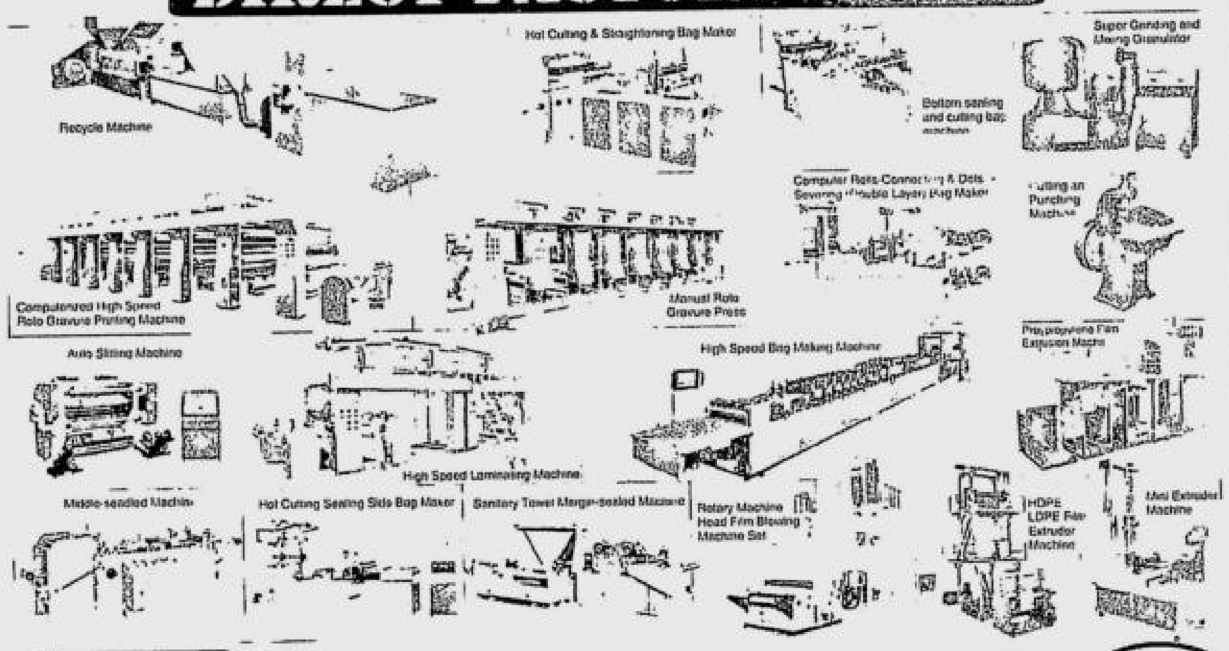
Model for illiterates

Earlier, Nokia released a cell phone model featuring more icons or pictures instead of letters to give people who cannot read and write more access to cell phones.

The company released the model after a four-year study on how illiterate people communicate that included several trips to India.

"We don't just churn out phones. We try to understand what people do ... how people use their phones by spending time in their homes," Chipchase said.

His group, however, has not conducted any study in the Philippines, which prides itself as the world's texting capital. The group intends to visit the country some time next year.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Bossi kin ask gov't not to use force

THE FAMILY OF CAPTIVE ITALIAN PRIEST GIANcarlo Bossi appealed to the Philippine government not to use military force in securing the priest's release, according to cable news network ANC.

The ANC report, sent from Italy, said the appeal was made during a rally attended by about 3,000 Italians and Filipinos in Italy to press for Bossi's release by his captors, believed to be Islamic militants in the remote province of Zamboanga Sibugay in Mindanao.

The appeal came as a top military officer working on the priest's release said Bossi's abductors offered to negotiate, quoting an intermediary.

Marine Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said a group claimed to have received a call from Bossi's abductors early Monday.

"There is a group that has approached me, but I am not entertaining them until they can produce proof of life," Dolorfino told The Associated Press, describing the group as concerned citizens tapped by local leaders to help the military find Bossi.

Dolorfino said the abductors must quickly prove that Bossi is alive by allowing the priest to phone him or any military official. The contact promised to relay Dolorfino's message to the abductors.

Dolorfino said he believes Bossi is still alive and being held near the boundary of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte provinces.

The 57-year-old missionary from Milan was snatched in neighboring Zamboanga Sibugay province on June 10 while on his way to celebrate Mass.

Dolorfino said no ransom has been discussed, but the contact asked for money to buy medicines for Bossi, who suffers from hypertension.

Dolorfino said Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels, who have ears on the ground and are interested in helping free Bossi, continued to concentrate their forces in the area where Bossi is believed to be held.

Bossi's fellow Italian priests in Mindanao from the Rome-based Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions said they have not been contacted by the abductors.

There was speculation in the local media that the abductors were in touch with the mission because a picture showing a white man's feet in a grassy area next to a rifle was posted on a Web site put up by the priests.

"We do not have any information about this picture," Italian priest Sebastian Dambra said. "We concluded that somebody put this there on their own initiative, but there is no connection with this case."

Newly elected officials in Central Mindanao also offered to help.

Imelda Quibranza Dimaporo, outgoing governor of Lanao del Norte, said she and officials in her province were prepared to help "in any way."

But she said reports that Bossi was moved out of the Zamboanga Peninsula could be a diversionary tactic.

Some officials said the best hiding place for Bossi and his kidnappers would be the Liguasan Marsh.

In Zamboanga City, Ustadz Shariff Mohsin Julabbi, a relative of Akiddin Abdusalam alias Commander Kiddie, the main suspect in the Bossi abduction, said the man authorities are blaming for the kidnapping "has been dead for almost for years now."

"If the military and police are pursuing the same person, then they are pursuing a dead suspect," Julabbi said.

Julabbi, a former Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leader in the Zamboanga Peninsula, said Abdusalam was killed in an Army checkpoint in Barangay Tigbanuang, Tungawan town, also in Zamboanga Sibugay, in 2003.

But Senior Supt. Francisco Cristobal, police chief of Zamboanga Sibugay, said Abdusalam is "very much alive and directly involved in the kidnapping of Father Bossi."

Cristobal said the military has rectified earlier reports that Abdusalam had been killed in an encounter. *Charlie Señase and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Canvass board of Isabela sacked; new members eyed

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—The Commission on Elections has appointed new members of the board of canvassers in Ilagan, Isabela, just as the municipal and provincial boards of canvassers were set to resume proceedings to determine the winning governor and vice governor there.

Lawyer Abraham Johnny Asuncion, acting Isabela election supervisor, said the replacement came following an order from the Comelec's second division for the municipal and provincial boards of canvassers (MBOC and PBOC) to re-convene and count the votes that were set aside due to a petition filed by gubernatorial candidate Benjamin Dy.

Asuncion said lawyer Ederlino Tabilas, Comelec director in Cagayan Valley, has named three election officers who will comprise the Ilagan MBOC.

Their identities, however, could not be revealed until the Comelec en banc approves their appointments, Asuncion said.

Tabilas replaced the Ilagan MBOC after its chair, lawyer Francisco Macabangon, fell ill and was confined to a hospital.

"With this replacement, we hope there will no longer be any delays. We all want to get this issues resolved so we can go back to our normal functions," said Asuncion, who is expected to return as election officer of Nueva Vizcaya after the Isabela controversy is settled.

The outcome of the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial contests in Isabela remained in limbo after the PBOC deferred proclamation of winners for the province's top two positions due to Dy's pre-proclamation protest. *Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

MUD MAN

RYAN LIM

A devotee of St. John the Baptist in Barangay Bibiclat, Aliaga, Nueva Ecija goes to the nearest rice field to put mud all over his body. They call it bibiclat mud festival, a yearly tradition to honor the town's patron saint. In the streets, people wore banana leaves while some watched on the sidelines giving alms to the mud people.

Tree cutting threatens Mt. Pulag forests

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—MOUNT Pulag's forests and ecosystem are being seriously threatened by loggers and environment officials are alarmed that even mossy forests—crucial habitats of endangered species—have not been spared from clearing.

Describing the situation as "critical," Manuel Pogeyed, chief of the provincial environment and natural resources office (Penro), called for more drastic legal measures against the culprits.

Pulag is Luzon's highest peak and the country's second highest mountain at 2,922 meters (9,586 feet) above sea level, next to Mt. Apo in Mindanao. It covers 11,550 hectares of virgin grasslands and lush forests, and its terrains slope down to 14 villages in five towns—Bokod, Kabayan and Buguias in Benguet, Tinoc in Ifugao, and Kayapa in Nueva Vizcaya.

"The rate of destruction within the identified forest areas needs intensive law enforcement actions and stepped-up efforts to stop them," Pogeyed told the INQUIRER.

Two areas in Kabayan have been declared hot spots following an investigation that showed deliberate bulldozing of trees. These are Sitio Baay in Barangay Tawangan and Sitio Tabeo in Barangay Ballay.

Teams that Penro sent to the areas reported that three patches of land, with a total area of 7.65 hectares, had been cleared for vegetable farming.

Pogeyed said 4,057 board feet of illegally cut pine trees were confiscated in the areas in separate inspections on May 7 and May 29.

Even trees in the mossy forests were cut, the teams said. "We are worried since it appeared that private interests do not care at all about the importance of mossy forests," Pogeyed said.

Mossy forests are critical portions of protected forests and national parks because they provide the habitat for endangered species of plants and animals.

Pulag's climate is tropical. Rainfall averages 4,489 millimeters a year and August is considered the wettest month with an average rainfall of 1,135 mm.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Pulag is the natural habitat of the dwarf bamboo and Benguet pine. It hosts 33 bird species and several mammals believed to be in danger of becoming extinct, like the Philippine deer, longhaired fruit bat and the giant bushy-tailed cloud rat.

Robber slain; cop, boy hurt as gangsters attack police

BIÑAN, LAGUNA—A SUSPECTED robber was killed while a policeman and four others, including a 12-year-old boy, were wounded when members of a criminal syndicate ambushed a group of policemen inside a subdivision in Barangay De la Paz here Friday, police said Saturday.

Suspect Arnulfo Espinola, 35, a resident of the place, died on the spot from a number of gunshot wounds in the body.

Wounded were PO1 Edwin Panelo, assigned at the Biñan police station; driver Ramil Capili, 33; Val Venus, 17; Naries Saria Dacumos, 12; and Priscilla Enriguez, 39, all residents of the same place.

Supt. Joselito Esquivel, town police chief, said the five were brought to the Perpetual Medical Center and the Philippine General Hospital where doctors declared them out of danger.

Esquivel said members of the intelligence branch of the Biñan police were conducting a surveillance operation in Almeda Subdivision at around 7 p.m. when they spotted a group of people placing their bets on two fruit game machines, a local version of the slot machine.

He said Panelo, with PO1 Ernesto Caceres and PO1 Rhobinson Manabat, seized the gambling machines and loaded it in a tricycle driven by Capili.

As the lawmen were about to leave the subdivision, Espinola and his group of local thugs ambushed the policemen using M-16 assault rifles and .45-cal. pistols.

Panelo, who was riding in the tricycle, was hit in the stomach but was able to return fire.

Caceres and Manabat, who were in another tricycle, also returned fire, hitting Espinola in the thighs, chest and arms.

Police are now hunting the other gang men identified as Danilo Catimbang, John-John Langka and Joel Astijida. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Groups assail permit given to coal plant in Iloilo town

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—ENVIRONMENTAL groups here have condemned the granting of a permit by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to a coal-fired power plant in Concepcion, Iloilo.

The Green Forum-Western Visayas said the granting of an environment compliance certificate (ECC) to the project in Barangay Nipa, Concepcion, some 111 km north of here, is a "setback" in efforts to curb toxic gas emissions.

Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes on May 27 issued the ECC to DMCI Holdings Inc., which would build a 100-megawatt coal plant costing $150 million in a 30-hectare area in Concepcion.

The plant is expected to be finished in three to four years.

In a statement, Green Forum coordinator Melvin Purzuelo said the project has not been endorsed by the provincial board.

The Madia-as Ecological Movement (MEM) and the People's Response for the Protection of the Environment (Protect) said the proposed coal-fired plant would endanger the northern towns of Iloilo, known for rich fishing grounds.

Ma. Geobelyn Lopez, head of the environmental group Protect, said coal wastes contain concentrated levels of toxic chemicals such as arsenic, mercury, chromium and cadmium, and poisons that can seep into groundwater and contaminate drinking water.

"These toxins build up in the human body and the environment, causing diseases and mutations, killing fish and other wildlife," said Lopez.

The DOE and proponents of the project are pushing for the construction of the coal-powered plant as one of the measures to increase the supply of electricity on Panay Island.

Panay is at the tail end of the Visayas power grid, which gets bulk of its supply from geothermal plants in Leyte. But the power demand of the island is expected to increase by 7.8 percent annually, one of the fastest growth rates among the regions, according to data of the National Power Corp. and the DOE.

Concepcion Mayor Raul Banias is supporting the project because he said the plant would generate 700 jobs during the four-year construction period.

The town would earn from the project about P12 million from permit fees and taxes.

George Baquiran, DMCI Holdings Inc. vice president for special projects, said they respect the views of opponents of the projects but they would proceed with the construction of the plant.

"The technology available to us already addresses the environmental concerns. But we cannot do anything if these groups insists on their views," Baquiran told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The proposed plant will use the Circulating Fluidized Bed Combustion (CFBC), a technology that would ensure the facility is environmentally safe because it eliminates the emission of harmful substances, the project proponents said.

Despite DMCI's assurance, Lopez maintained that "there is no such thing as clean coal."

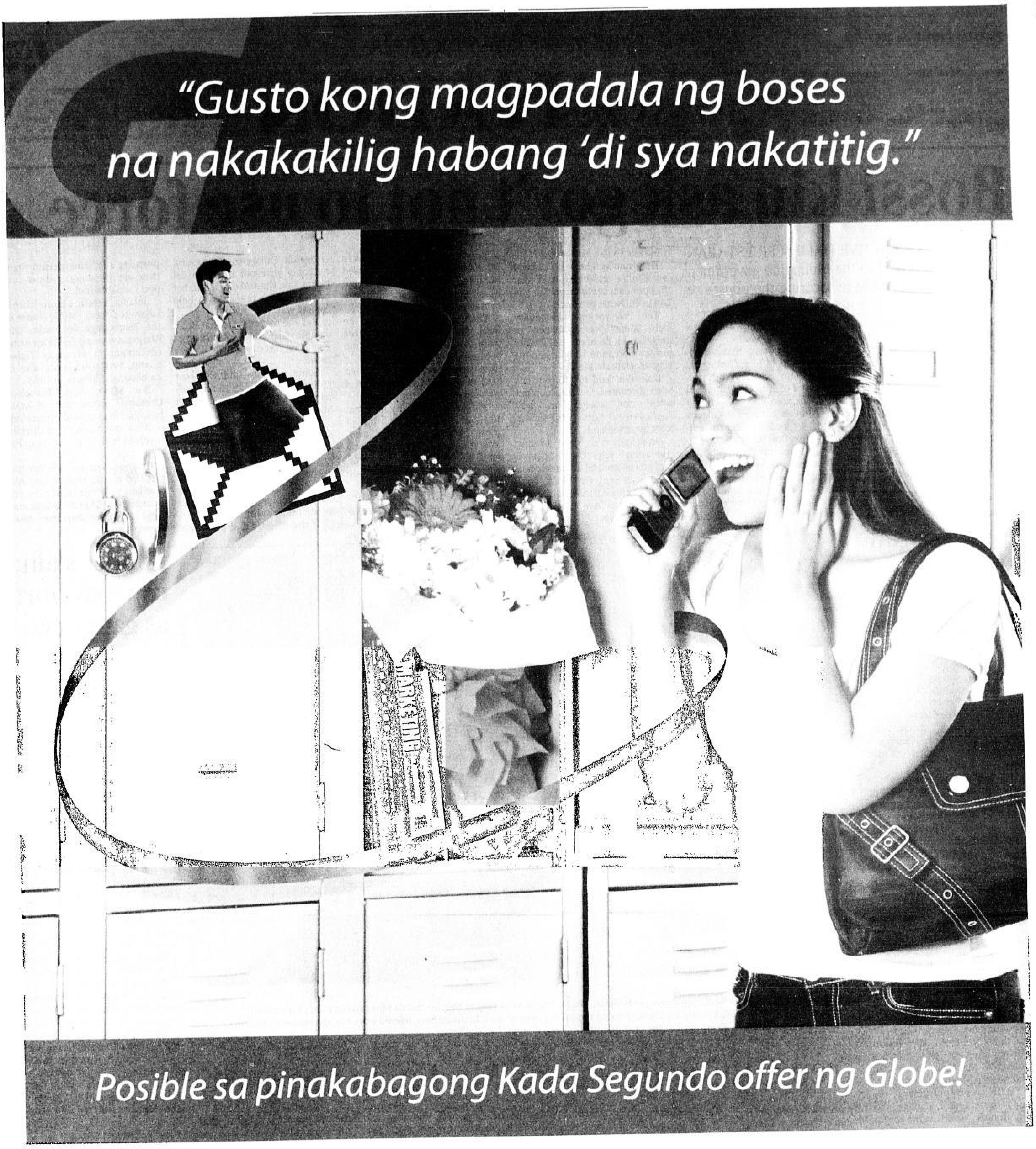
"We know that all coal plants, without exception, emit and discharge pollutants significant enough to seriously affect the health of surrounding communities and the well-being of the environment," said Lopez.

Catholic and Protestant churches are also opposing the coal plant.

Two Catholic archbishops and six bishops in Western Visayas have issued earlier a pastoral statement against coal plants.

NO CLEAN coal plant. Carbon emissions, such as this coming from a coal plant in Calaca, Batangas, was among the factors seen in global warming.

INQUIRER PHOTO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Chemical leak downs 27 in Pasig City

By Kristine L. Alave

TWENTY-SEVEN PERSONS, including three babies and three pregnant women, were rushed to the hospital yesterday after an acetylene tank in a junk shop in Pasig City leaked and caused an explosion.

The blast released fumes that resulted in dizziness, nausea and difficulty in breathing in the victims.

Pasig City fire, police and environment officials rushed to the Spike Junk Shop at 8 Mercedes Ave., Barangay Caniogan after they received reports of a chemical leak in the area.

FO1 Salvador Norbete, city fire department investigator, said the incident occurred at about 9:20 a.m. while two junk shop workers were trying to open the tank with a metal cutter. The sparks and chemicals from the metal cutter mixed with the fumes, leading to an explosion, Norbete said, adding that the workers had no idea what the tank contained.

A fireman, F01 Roberto Semillano, was also treated at the hospital, along with the two junk shop workers. Based on the symptoms exhibited by the victims and the characteristics of the chemical, investigators said the tank may have contained chlorine gas.

"The victims had difficulty breathing and experienced dizziness. It's nothing serious, but some of them needed to go to the emergency room," Raquel Naciongayo, city environment office chief, said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, chlorine can be pressurized and cooled to change it into liquid form for easier storage and shipping. When it is released, it quickly turns into gas with a pungent and irritating odor and spreads quickly.

Supt. Frank Uyami, Pasig police chief, said they are investigating the incident, adding that the owner could face charges if found negligent.

Norbete said the junk shop owner, Roberto Camelon, had already coordinated with authorities and visited the victims in the hospital.

Naciongayo said she had ordered the closure of the junk shop, noting that it violated a

CHEMICAL/ A20

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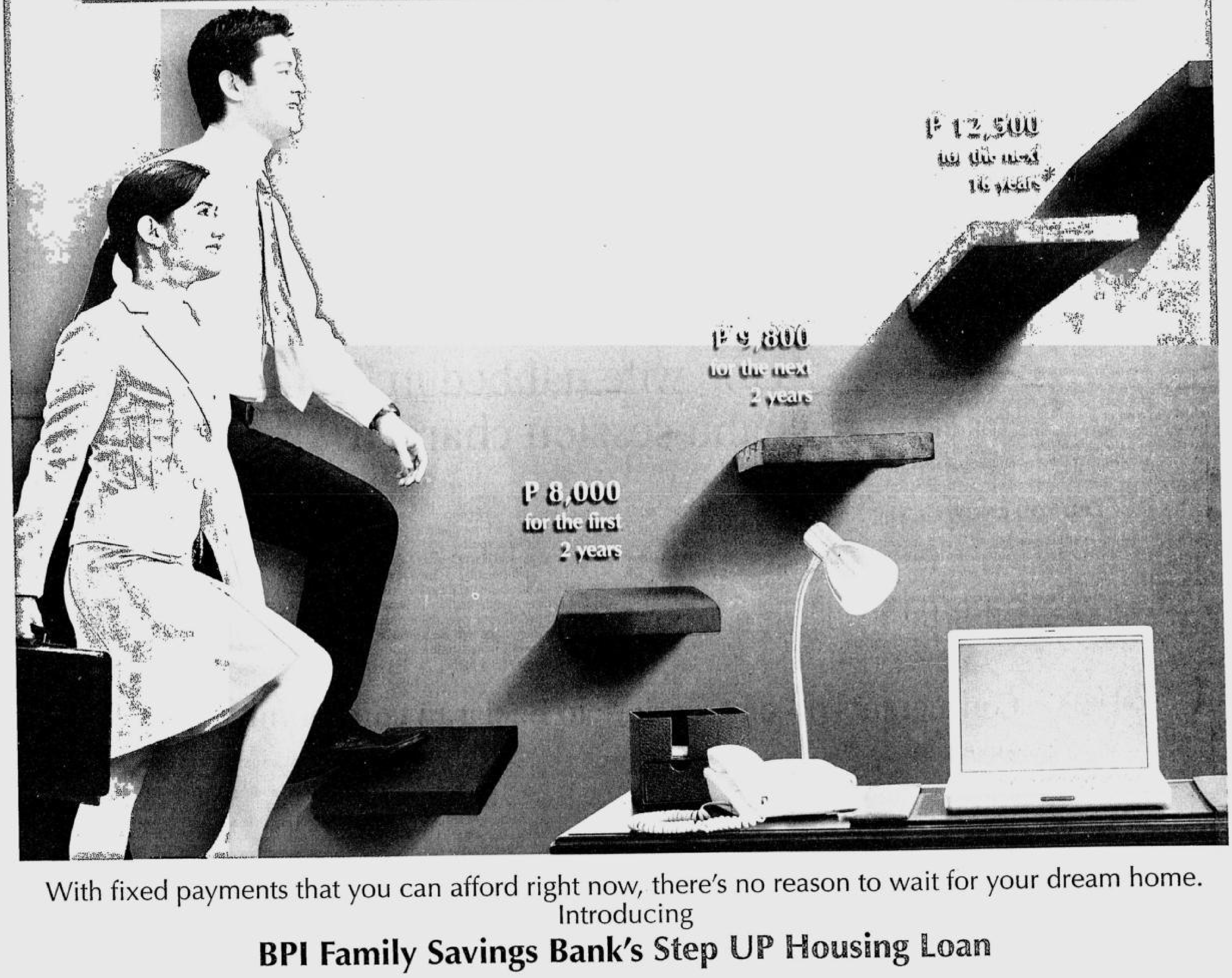

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2 shabu warehouses busted in Manila, Rizal

By Alcuin Papa
and Kristine L. Alave

PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT Agency (PDEA) agents raided earlier this month two shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) warehouses in Rizal province and Manila and seized millions of pesos worth of chemicals and equipment used in making the drug.

Objects of the June 8 raid were a barn converted into a warehouse at Sitio Gugo, Barangay San Jose in Baras, Rizal and a warehouse at 888 Alvarado Street in Binondo, Manila.

Three men were arrested during the raid in Rizal. They were Angel Cheng alias Frank Tan Ramos, Romeo Sta. Ana Iposada and Narciso Francisco.

Senior Insp. Arthur Masungsong, Baras police chief, said two other suspects managed to escape.

Found at the site were 250 liters of liquid methamphetamine, various laboratory equipment and chemicals. In the Binondo (Manila) raid, another suspect, Ouyang Chi Jin, was arrested. According to the PDEA, the warehouse was being used as a storage facility for shabu making equipment and various chemicals.

Over 4.5 tons of chemicals worth over P400 million were seized during the raids.

The suspects were charged with violating Republic Act No. 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

According to the PDEA, the raids, which were carried out in coordination with the China National Narcotics Control Commission, neutralized the Cai Ashan drug syndicate operating in the Philippines.

Cai was arrested on June 3 in Beijing, along with five other cohorts.

Liu Yuejin, head of the antidrug bureau at China's Ministry of Public Security, said Cai had been running drug factories in Manila since 2004, a wire report of the Associated Press said.

3 car theft suspects shot dead in QC shootout

By Jeannette I. Andrade

POLICE SAID THEY FOILED A plot to rob a bank in Pampanga with the death of three men—believed to be members of a group involved in car theft and robbery—during a shootout in Quezon City yesterday.

One of those killed was identified as Naldy Samonte. The other two men were described as between 25 and 30 years old, 5'5" and 5'6" tall.

The three were on board a Starex van with license plate XGY when they came to a checkpoint manned by members of the Traffic Management Group's Task Force Limbas who were conducting anticar theft operations at the corner of Boni Serrano and Katipunan Avenue at 3 a.m. Instead of stopping, the van's driver stepped on the gas, prompting the police to give chase.

At the corner of Katipunan Avenue and Aurora Boulevard, the men in the van reportedly shot at the policemen who returned fire.

Recovered from the van were license plates, a caliber .45 pistol, an M-16 rifle, two cellular phones and two black baseball caps with the word "Police" printed on them.

Also recovered was a sketch of the SM San Fernando mall in Pampanga with the Banco De Oro branch marked with the word "target."

Based on the group's plans, 14 men would carry out the robbery on a Friday, between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

The plan also indicated where the 14 men were supposed to be stationed, their escape route and where the getaway motorcycles were to be parked. The group also even indicated where an armored van would be parked at that time.

A man who identified himself as Joseph Sarmiento later told the police that he was the owner of the Starex that was taken from him at gunpoint by armed men on June 23 on Roxas Boulevard.

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Marlon Guevarra teaches his younger brother, Michael, how to write his name during the start of classes in the Musmos Daycare Center at the Parola Compound in Tondo.

REM ZAMORA

New tutors, annex greet Ducat's Tondo wards

By Allison W. Lopez

THEIR "SIR DUCAT" MAY STILL be in jail, but for around 400 children of the Musmos Daycare Center in Manila's Parola compound, it's back to school once again.

Seated in small plastic chairs suited for their tiny frames, the uniformed children waited patiently as their mothers fussed and their teachers scurried about for the early morning program yesterday that signaled the start of classes. Loud dance music blared and made a distant memory of the hellish episode in March, when 26 wards, some from the center, and three teachers were held inside a bus by the daycare owner, Armando "Jun" Ducat.

The kids were unharmed and freed after 10 hours, but the armed Ducat and his companion Caezar Carbonell were charged with serious illegal detention, a nonbailable offense. The two are now detained at the City Jail.

"I don't think they did anything wrong. Maybe they just wanted to express their sentiments to the government," said Agnes Cabugayan, mother of one of the hostaged children.

Cabugayan was one with other parents who threw their full support behind the hostage takers by executing affidavits that they were not interested in suing them.

She said her 7-year-old daughter, a Grade 1 student at the Rosauro Almario Elementary School in Tondo, was doing "okay" and did not seem to be affected by the incident.

She said she and her husband eventually forgave Ducat. "He's sincere and also helps many others," Cabugayan added.

This year, the daycare center admitted 420 students, compared with last year's 300, added two teachers to their staff, and has rented a two-story unit to accommodate the growing number of students.

DID YOU KNOW

A SPANISH royal decree led to the opening on June 25, 1865 of the Old Bilibid Prisons in Manila. Because of the increasing number of prisoners, the penitentiary was transferred in 1936 to Muntinlupa, and was renamed New Bilibid Prisons.

NBP had an original land area of 551 hectares, but 104 hectares were allotted for a housing project of the Department of Justice. As of October 2004, the NBP has 16,747 prisoners.

Cyril L. Bonabente,
Inquirer Research

Actor, wife nabbed in Taguig shabu session charged

By Julie M. Aurelio

THREE DAYS AFTER THEY WERE arrested for allegedly engaging in a shabu session, actor Bing Davao and wife Fatima were charged in the Taguig City Prosecutor's Office yesterday for drug-related offenses.

The couple, along with two others, were arrested on Friday night in an apartment in Maharlika Village, Taguig City. Seized from Fatima were three plastic sachets of suspected shabu.

Insp. Ariel Bait, city police intelligence chief, said the couple and the two other suspects—PO1 Abdulpatta Tula and Hasbi Muco, a former policeman, were charged with possession of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia.

Bait told the INQUIRER over the phone that the couple had been detained at the city police station since their arrest Friday night.

"So far, they are still keeping mum about the incident," he added.

Davao, the older brother of actor Ricky Davao and son of actor Charlie Davao, has refused to comment on his arrest.

Bait said the police have yet to verify reports linking Fatima to Amin Imam Boratong, the alleged operator of the compound housing shabu dens raided in Pasig City in 2006.

Chemical leak downs 27 ...

From page A19

number of safety and environment regulations.

She noted that abandoned tanks in the junk shop were not properly labeled and that the workers did not follow the correct disposal procedures. Officials have already cordoned off the junk shop for safety purposes.

Court grants 60-day reprieve to Baclaran community

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS granted a 60-day temporary restraining order (TRO) preventing the eviction of residents who have stayed behind at the reclamation area in Baclaran, Pasay City.

It also ordered a stop to the further demolition of the remaining shanties and the mosque in the area owned by the Philippine Reclamation Authority.

The appellate court's Fifth Division issued the order after the residents, through Abdelmana Tanandato, filed a petition for a TRO after it was denied by a Pasay City court.

"The respondent PRA, through its general manager and CEO Andrea Domingo, any other agency or their duly authorized representatives, are ordered to desist from demolishing petitioners' houses, structures, and mosque and evicting them therefrom," the order from the appellate court, said the order signed by Associate Justice Hakim Abdulwahid.

On June 7, the PRA tore down the shanties of the residents of the Muslim community, who had insisted on fighting for their Grand Mosque which also faces the threat of demolition.

"We are confident that the people cannot be removed now with the TRO, more so without a relocation area," lawyer Firdausi Abbas, who is representing the residents, told a press conference in Pasay City yesterday,

Now, who's unethical?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo really meant it when she said her last three years in office would be spent leaving a legacy.

When she was told that people were dropping the names of her relatives with Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG) chief Antonio Villar for the release of seized cargoes, the President was quoted as having said, "Arrest them."

Ms Arroyo particularly singled out a person reportedly very close to her son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo, for using his name.

A Filipino-Chinese, allegedly notorious for using the President's husband's name, was also mentioned during her meeting with Villar recently.

She said the Chinoy's undervalued shipments should be seized, and if there's evidence he owned them, he should be charged in court.

Exactly 260 containers, believed to be filled with grossly undervalued or misdeclared goods, are being held at the piers by the PASG.

They will soon be opened for inspection.

A ship loaded with steel pipes that were allegedly misdeclared as cheap goods is also being held by the PASG.

Now, if those containers will be released after proper taxes and duties are paid to the government, would-be smugglers will have second thoughts pursuing their trade.

* * *

Who is this Court of Appeals justice allegedly holding regular lunch meetings with his "clients" at a five-star hotel a few meters away from the appellate court building?

"Clients" refer to litigants or their lawyers who have pending cases in the justice's division.

The justice reportedly talks business with the clients, which is downright unethical and immoral.

It's like President Macapagal-Arroyo allegedly talking with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to "protect" her votes during the counting for the 2004 presidential elections.

* * *

Jess Matubis, spokesperson for Maynilad Water Services, says QualiBet was being "unethical" when it came out publicly with the results of a study that showed water in Metro Manila was dirty.

Matubis was talking out of turn because Maynilad never hired QualiBet to conduct the study.

It would have been a different thing altogether if QualiBet, after being commissioned by Maynilad to conduct a secret study, made the results public.

QualiBet, a private testing agency, was hired by private individuals.

* * *

Giant network ABS-CBN is trying to discredit QualiBet in its news and public affairs programs.

The network gets the side of the testing agency when it lambasts the testing agency all right.

However, it seems to deliberately edit out the most important points the agency has to say in defense of its findings, making the agency appear like the villain.

Why?

* * *

Persons who sell fake medicines should be punished to the full extent of the law.

A Chinese-Filipino businessman who owns a drugstore in Chinatown was allegedly behind the importation of fake Chinese medicines seized by government agents recently.

This Chinoy allegedly repacks the fake Chinese medicines and sells them without permission from the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD).

It seems BFAD is sleeping on its job.

I recall a businessman who sold fake drugs in the 1980s who was killed by Manila policemen in an alleged shootout.

The officer who led in the slaying of the businessman said the latter deserved to die because he committed a heinous crime.

I fully agree.

Selling fake drugs that could result in a patient's death is a heinous crime.

METROBRIEFS

MJ's estranged live-in partner has new lawyer

AFTER successfully defending Subic rape victim "Nicole," lawyer Evalyn Ursua will be representing in court Mark Jimenez's estranged live-in partner, Carol Castañeda. Ursua became Castañeda's counsel in the protection order case being heard at the Taguig City Regional Trial Court after Lorna Kapunan withdrew from the case. "She withdrew as counsel in open court on June 22 during a hearing at the Taguig City court. She abandoned her client in the middle of it all," Frank Chavez, the lawyer of Jimenez, claimed over the phone yesterday. Kapunan confirmed the news in a text message to the INQUIRER. Her message read, "Yes, we filed our withdrawal last Friday." She also said that she had been replaced by Ursua. When contacted by the INQUIRER, however, Ursua refused to confirm the report. "I won't confirm or deny that I am already Carol's lawyer. I want to be very careful," she said in a phone interview. Castañeda earlier filed for a permanent protection order from Jimenez, claiming she was a victim of physical and psychological abuse in the decades they lived together.

Julie M. Aurelio

Binay to MMDA: Heed SC decision

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday reminded the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority to heed the Supreme Court decision defining the limits of the agency's powers. "The MMDA cannot enforce resolutions by the Metro Manila Council without the appropriate local ordinances. That is the law," he said. Binay, a former MMDA chair, was reacting to two resolutions recently passed by the MMC. The first bans public assemblies, rallies, motorcades and the like on major roads without a permit from the MMDA, while the second requires motorcycle riders to paint their license plate numbers on their helmets. "The Supreme Court has spoken clearly on the extent of the MMDA's powers. The agency has no power to legislate," Binay said. In order to implement MMC resolutions, the mayors could ask their local councils to pass the appropriate ordinances, he said. "MMDA Chair (Bayani) Fernando may not like it, but it is the law. As public officials, we should set the example by obeying the law," Binay added. "The goals of improving the traffic situation in Metro Manila and fighting criminality do not justify noncompliance with existing laws," the mayor said.

DJ Yap

Blair formally hands over Labour leadership

LONDON—LONG HERALDED and often rancorous, Britain's transfer of power from Tony Blair entered its final countdown on Sunday when the governing Labour Party anointed Gordon Brown as his successor. It ended an era in which Blair fought far-flung wars in the Muslim world, brought peace closer to home in Northern Ireland and struggled to reform public services.

The ceremonial crowning of Brown as the only candidate in a seven-week contest for the party leadership opens the way for a defining moment in his long rivalry with Blair, when the two men are to pay separate visits to Queen Elizabeth II on Wednesday, Blair to resign as prime minister and Brown to take over.

"I am ready, ready to serve," Brown declared in a speech to a special Labour conference in Manchester, defining himself as a "conviction politician" driven by values of "duty, honesty, hard work, family and respect for others."

Those values; he said, "are my moral compass. This is who I am."

For Blair the moment was visibly poignant, foreshadowing a life beyond the trappings of power he had acquired in 10 years on the global stage, aligning himself closely with President Bush and leading his land into a war in Iraq that cost him a level of popularity other British politicians might only dream of.

But for Brown it was a moment of vindication, the culmination of years of dogged maneuvering to force Blair to redeem a pledge struck several years before Labour secured its landslide victory in 1997.

The rivalry between the men provided a constant subplot in British politics that sometimes took over the entire political arena—their critics called it a soap opera—as Brown pressed Blair to commit himself to a departure date. *NYT*

Gordon Brown for Britain

BRITISH PM Tony Blair introduces his successor, Gordon Brown, during a special Labour leadership meeting in Manchester, England June 24. AP

GAZA HOSTAGE

BBC employees stick a banner on a poster of their kidnapped colleague Alan Johnston in London, June 20, when the BBC Gaza correspondent spent his 100th day in captivity. Johnston appeared on a video June 25 with a bomb strapped to his body warning that his captors would set it off if any attempt was made to rescue him. AFP

US managers seek more visas for hi-tech workers

WASHINGTON—BILL GATES AND Steven A. Ballmer of Microsoft have led a small army of high-tech executives to Capitol Hill, urging lawmakers to provide more visas for temporary foreign workers and permanent immigrants who can fill critical jobs.

Google, meanwhile, has reminded senators that one of its founders, Sergey Brin, came from the Soviet Union as a young boy. To stay competitive in a "knowledge-based economy," company officials have said, Google needs to hire many more immigrants as software engineers, mathematicians and computer scientists.

The top executives of these and other technology companies have been making a huge effort to reshape the Senate immigration bill to meet their demand for more foreign workers. But they have had only limited success, as is often the case when strong-willed corporate leaders confront powerful members of Congress. Several provisions of the Senate bill, meant to enhance protections for US workers and to prevent visa fraud and abuse, are seen as clashing with the companies' recruitment needs.

The Senate plans to resume work on the bill this week. Much of the debate will focus on proposals for granting legal status to illegal immigrants. But the sections of the bill affecting technology industries could prove to be very important as well.

Technology companies want to be able to hire larger numbers of well-educated, foreign-born professionals who, they say, can help them succeed in the global economy. In particular, they want to hire more foreign-born scientists and engineers graduating from American universities.

The Senate bill would expand the number of work visas for skilled professionals, but technology companies said the proposed increase was not nearly enough. High-tech companies were surprised and upset by the bill that emerged last month from secret Senate negotiations. E. John Krumholtz, director of federal affairs at Microsoft, said the bill was "worse than the status quo, and the status quo is a disaster."

In the last two weeks, these businesses have quietly negotiated for changes to meet some of their needs. But the bill still falls far short of what they wanted, which suggests that their political clout does not match their economic strength.

Stephen W. Yale-Loehr, co-author of a treatise on immigration law, said: "High-tech companies are very organized. They have numerous lobby groups. When Bill Gates advocates more H-1B visas and green cards for tech workers, everyone listens." *NYT*

Liberia's Taylor again boycotts resumption of war crimes trial

THE HAGUE—THE WAR CRIMES TRIAL of former Liberian President Charles Taylor resumed in The Hague on Monday with Taylor again absent after boycotting the opening three weeks ago.

Taylor, who is charged with instigating murder, rape and mutilation during Sierra Leone's civil war, said in a letter in early June it would not be a fair trial. The court's principal defender said at the opening of Monday's session Taylor would again not be attending.

"He said he believes that the chamber knows why he isn't here," the principal defender said.

Presiding Judge Julia Sebutinde replied: "For the record the chamber does not know why he isn't here."

In his letter to the court, Taylor, once one of Africa's most feared warlords, said his defense team was outgunned by the prosecution, and had not been able to prepare his case.

"It is therefore with great regret that I must decline to attend any further hearings in this case until adequate time and facilities are provided to my defense team," he said.

Taylor has since been able to meet in The Hague with the Freetown-based court official in charge of organizing and funding his defense, which Taylor had said lacked resources.

THEN Liberian rebel leader Charles Taylor in a September 1990 photo. AFP

Prosecutors hope the trial will end impunity for African strongmen as well as send a signal that international justice can operate efficiently and fairly. However, some observers fear Taylor is intent on disrupting proceedings.

Taylor has pleaded not guilty to 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, related to the 1991-2002 civil war which killed an estimated 50,000 people.

Even among Africa's horrific wars, the fighting in Sierra Leone stands out for its exceptional brutality—casual murder, mass rapes, the hacking of limbs from civilians and the press ganging of child soldiers as young as eight.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up jointly by the country's government and the United Nations in 2002 to try those deemed most responsible for human rights violations during the later stages of the civil war.

Prosecutors promised to produce strong and compelling evidence, including letters and witness testimony, that Taylor directed Revolutionary United Front rebels as they carried out a campaign of terror against Sierra Leone's civilians.

Last week in Freetown the court handed down its first verdicts, finding three leaders of a militia guilty of war crimes that included killing, raping and mutilating civilians.

They are due to be sentenced on July 16.

Taylor's trial is being held in The Hague because of fears it could spur instability if held in Freetown. *Reuters*

Suicide blasts kill 23 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—TWO SUICIDE VEHICLE BOMBINGS killed at least 23 people in Iraq on Monday, mostly policemen and prisoners, as insurgents launched fresh assaults on the country's fledgling police force.

The attacks came a day after an Iraqi court sentenced Ali Hassan al-Majid, widely known as "Chemical Ali"—executed dictator Saddam Hussein's cousin and former defense minister—to death for the slaughter of 182,000 Kurds in 1988.

Fifteen people were killed when a bomber ploughed an explosives-laden oil tanker into the police headquarters of the northern Iraqi town of Baiji, a local police officer said.

Another 50 people, mostly civilians, were wounded.

"A suicide bomber driving an oil tanker tried to break into the building but he blew himself up at the gate because he could not get in. It resulted in huge damage to the building," said Police Captain Ahmed Hussein of Baiji.

"All the wounded are civilians from shops near the headquarters, but most of those killed are prisoners and policemen," he said, adding that rescuers were still pulling bodies out of the rubble.

Local authorities have imposed a full curfew and blocked all roads leading in or out of the town, which is just north of Saddam's hometown of Tikrit. Residents have been warned to stay inside.

The attack in Baiji came around three hours after another early morning bombing in the town of Hilla, south of Baghdad.

There a suicide bomber slammed into a crowd of recruits waiting outside a police academy, killing eight and wounding several dozen.

"The recruits were just a week away from their graduation," said Police Lt. Mohammed al-Dulaimi of Hilla police.

Dr. Saad al-Hilli from the town's general hospital said more than nine people were in critical condition.

An AFP reporter in Hilla said the attack gouged out a large crater in the middle of the street. A number of nearby buildings, including a school, and many shops were damaged by the blast.

Salim Saleh, the governor of Babil province, who visited the site, blamed the attack on "takfiris" (Sunni extremists).

Hilla has seen regular bomb attacks as Sunni insurgents have targeted Shiite pilgrims traveling from Baghdad south to the holy shrine cities of Karbala and Najaf.

On March 6, at least 90 Shiite pilgrims were killed in Hilla by two suicide bombers who exploded themselves in a crowd of pilgrims headed to Karbala.

The two bombings on Monday appear to be the latest assaults on Iraq's fledgling security forces, seen by both the US military and the Iraqi government as the cornerstone of any future stability in the country.

Insurgents have managed to carry out high-profile bomb attacks even as US and Iraq forces have launched massive operations in various parts of the country aimed at rooting out al-Qaida strongholds. *AFP*

Tuna shortage spurs sushi panic in Japan

TOKYO—SUSHI MADE WITH DEER meat? How about a slice of raw horse on that rice?

These are some of the most extreme alternatives being considered by Japanese chefs as shortages of tuna threaten to remove it from Japan's sushi menus—something as unthinkable here as Texas without barbecue is in the United States.

So when global fishing bodies recently began lowering the limits on catches in the world's rapidly depleting tuna fisheries, Japan fell into a national panic.

Nightly news programs ran reports of how higher prices were driving top-grade tuna off supermarket shelves and the conveyer belts at sushi chain stores. At nicer restaurants, sushi chefs began experimenting with substitutes, from cheaper varieties of fish to terrestrial alternatives and even, heaven forbid, American sushi variations like avocado rolls.

"It's like America running out of steak," said Tadashi Yamagata, vice chair of Japan's national union of sushi chefs. "Sushi without tuna just would not be sushi."

The problem is the growing appetite for sushi and sashimi outside Japan, not only in the US but also in Russia, South Korea and China. And fishing experts say that the shortages and rising prices will only become more severe as the population of bluefin tuna—the big, slow-maturing type most favored in sushi—fails to keep up with worldwide demand.

Since the start of last year, the average price of imported frozen northern and Pacific bluefin has risen more than a third, to $13 a pound. *NYT*

Chinese woman recounts sex slavery horror under Japanese

By Royston Chan

RUGAO, CHINA—ZHOU FENYING is a living witness to the dark history that still poisons China's relations with Japan more than 60 years after World War II.

When Zhou was 22, Japanese soldiers came to her village in eastern China, grabbed her and her sister-in-law and carted them off to a military brothel, she says.

Now 91, Zhou has broken decades of silence to speak of her traumatic experience as a "comfort woman"—the euphemism the invading Japanese used to describe women forced into sex slavery.

"I hid with my husband's sister under a millstone. Later, the Japanese soldiers discovered us and pulled us out by our legs. They tied us both to their vehicle. Later they used more ropes to tie and secure us and drove us away," she told Reuters in her home village in Jiangsu province.

"They then took us to the 'comfort woman lodge.' There was nothing good there," she said.

"For four to five hours a day, it was torture. They gave us food afterwards, but every day we cried and we just did not want to eat it," Zhou added, sitting in her sparsely decorated home.

The Chinese government says Japan has yet to atone properly for its war crimes, which it says included massacres and forcing people to work as virtual slaves in factories or as prostitutes.

In 2005, a push by Japan for a permanent UN Security Council seat sparked sometimes violent anti-Japanese street protests in cities across China, with demonstrators denouncing Tokyo and demanding compensation and an apology for the war.

Zhou—neatly dressed in a dark blue traditional Chinese shirt, her greying hair combed back into a bun—avoided saying what had happened to her in the brothel, except that she was there with at least 20 other Chinese women.

But her son, Jiang Weixun, 62, said she had told him they were repeatedly raped by Japanese soldiers on a daily basis.

This harrowing experience has left a deep scar on Zhou's life. She cannot forget, and nor can she forgive.

"If it were you, wouldn't you hate them? Of course I hate them. But after the war, all the Japanese went home. I'm already so old. I think they are all dead by now," Zhou said.

Zhou said she had served as a "comfort woman" for two months before a local town official rescued her by paying off the Japanese.

She went back to her husband of 10 years, Ni Jincheng, who later died fighting the Japanese.

Zhou remarried and lives with her son, Jiang, from her second marriage.

Jiang said his mother had been moved to tell her story after learning of the death of Lei Guiying, a well-known former Chinese comfort woman.

Lei died of a brain hemorrhage in April. She had gone public with her experiences last year after hiding the ordeal from her family for 60 years.

Tokyo has not paid direct compensation to any of the estimated 200,000 mostly Asian women forced to work in brothels for the Japanese military before and during World War II, saying all claims were settled by peace treaties that ended the war. *Reuters*

ZHOU Fenying REUTERS

6 UN soldiers killed in Lebanon blast

SPANISH UN soldiers carry their dead comrade killed by a roadside bomb explosion in the southern Lebanese Marjayoun-Khiam valley, June 24. AFP

KHIAM, LEBANON—SECURITY WAS BOOSTED IN south Lebanon on Monday after a bomb attack killed six UN peacekeepers, further rattling security in the country where the army has been battling Islamist militants for weeks.

Spanish Defense Minister Jose Antonio Alonso was in southern Lebanon visiting his country's troops after Sunday's blast, which killed three Spaniards and three Colombian nationals.

It was the first fatal attack on peacekeepers since the UN Interim Force in Lebanon's mandate was expanded last year in the wake of a devastating 34-day war between Israeli troops and the Hezbollah Shiite militia.

Security in the deeply divided country has already been shaken by a deadly standoff between the army and al-Qaida inspired Fatah al-Islam militants in northern Lebanon, and a string of bomb attacks in and around Beirut.

No one has claimed the UN attack, but Lebanese judicial sources have told AFP that captured fighters from Fatah al-Islam have threatened attacks on peacekeepers.

A Lebanese security source said the car bomb was detonated by remote control as the peacekeepers' armored vehicle passed by in the Marjayoun-Khiam valley, an area about 10 km from the Israeli border.

A Spanish colonel said it was a "deliberate attack."

"This attack was very well prepared in advance," the officer said at the scene. "The bodies of two of the victims were blown several meters by the force of the blast."

Unifil commander Maj. Gen. Claudio Graziano of Italy said the bombing was aimed at destabilizing the region.

"It's not an attack against Lebanon and Unifil only but against the stability of the region. This attack has made Unifil more committed to fulfill its mission in southern Lebanon," he said in a statement.

In Madrid on Sunday, Alonso told a news conference his country "supports and will continue to support the United Nations Unifil mission." Unifil first deployed in Lebanon in 1978 after an Israeli invasion but was expanded from some 2,000 members after the July-August war between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas who dominated the south of the country. *AFP*

N. Korea says it's ready to move on nuke deal

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA SAID on Monday that the standoff over frozen funds had been resolved and it would now start implementing a nuclear disarmament deal struck in February.

The first step would be to hold discussions in Pyongyang on Tuesday with officials of the UN nuclear watchdog on shutting down the country's nuclear facilities, North Korea's KCNA news agency quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesperson as saying.

"As the funds that had been frozen at Macau's Banco Delta Asia have been transferred as we demanded, the troublesome issue of the frozen funds is finally resolved," he said.

He said there could now be "action for action": "As part of that, there will be discussions with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) delegates June 26 in Pyongyang on shutting down nuclear facilities and inspections and monitoring."

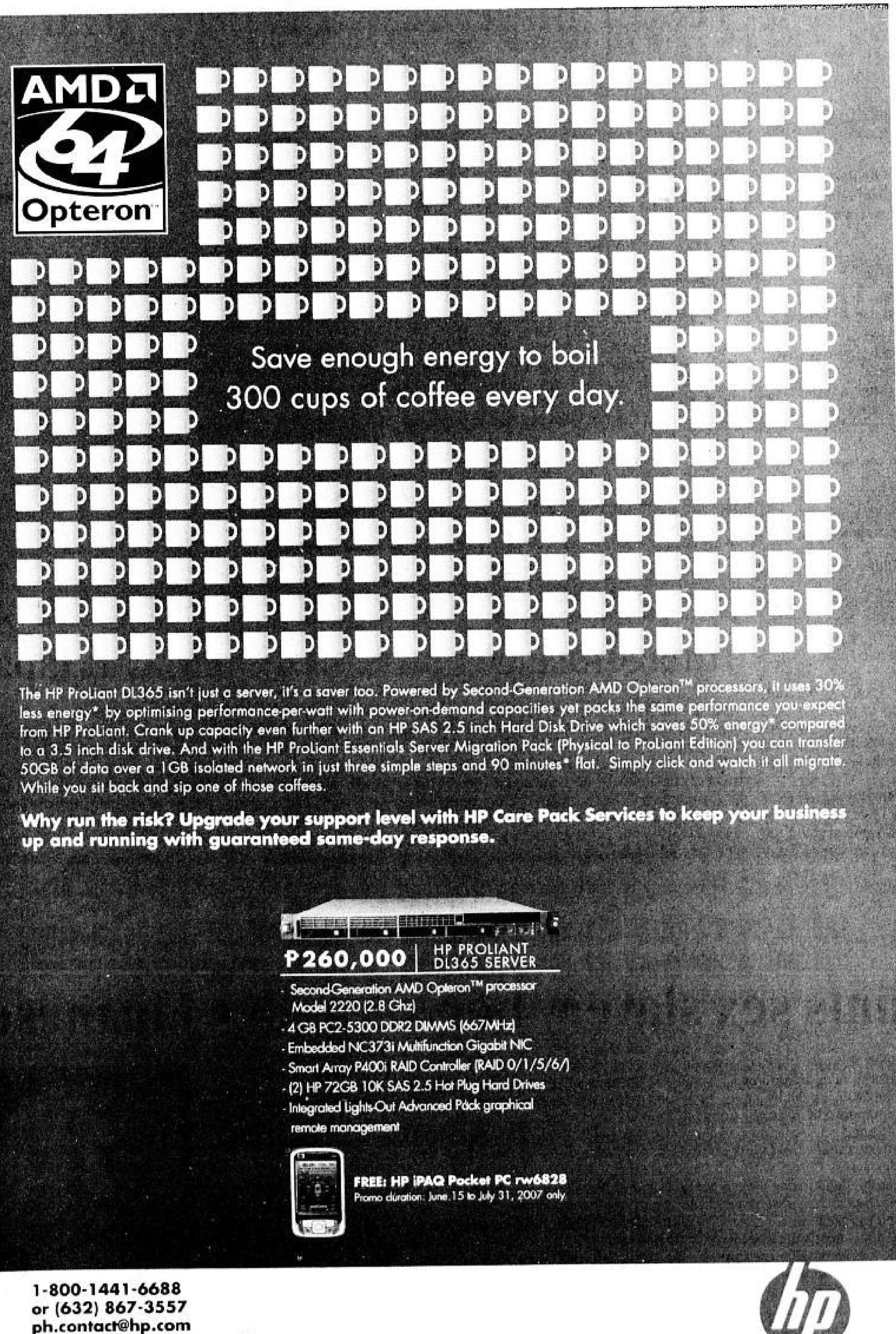
Earlier, Russia's Dalkombank said $25 million, frozen after the United States accused North Korea of laundering illicit funds for the reclusive country, had been transferred to Pyongyang.

North Korea had refused to honor the disarmament-for-aid deal struck by six countries until it got the money back.

That breakthrough came as an IAEA inspector arrived in China on his way to North Korea, where he hopes to arrange the return of officials to monitor a shutdown of the Yongbyon reactor.

The reactor is the centerpiece of North Korea's nuclear program and source of weapons-grade plutonium.

In exchange for the shutdown, impoverished North Korea will receive fuel aid and other benefits, including steps to lift trade sanctions and remove it from a US list of state sponsors of terrorism. *Reuters*



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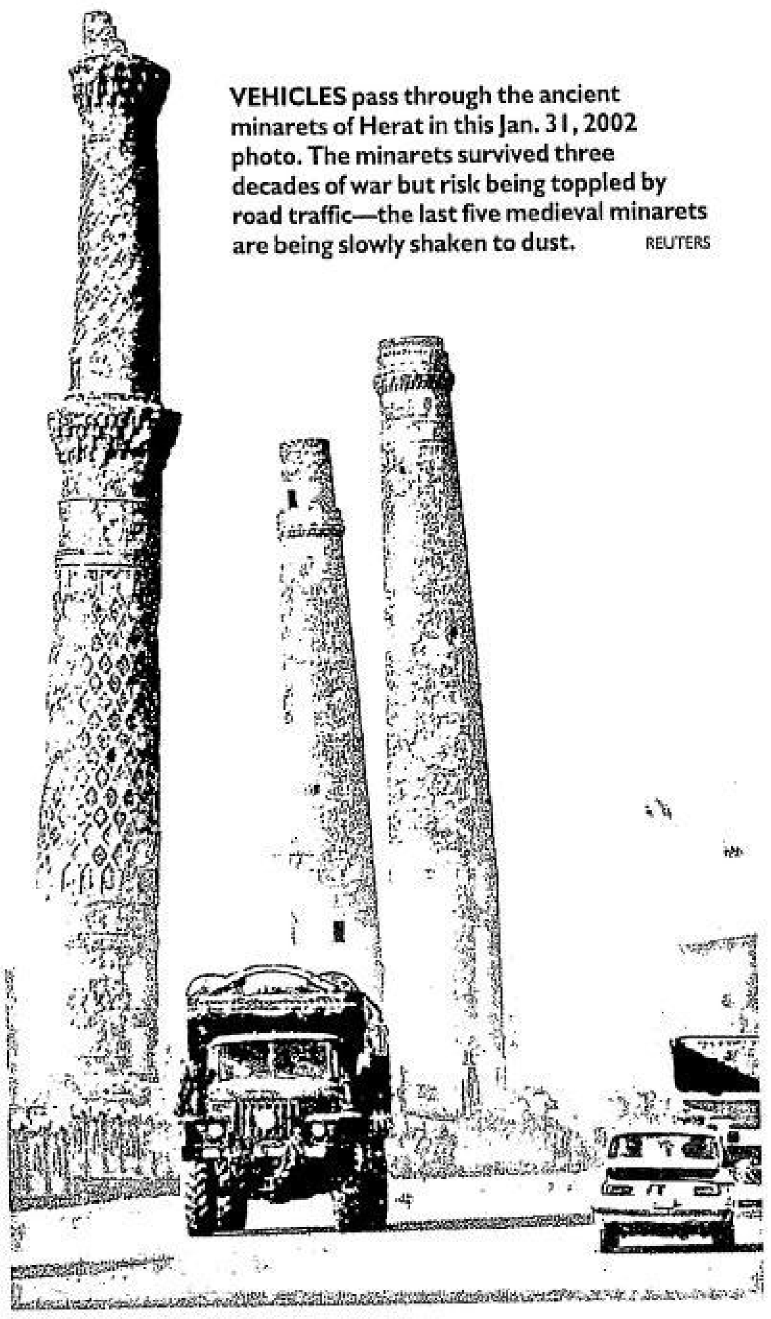

VEHICLES pass through the ancient minarets of Herat in this Jan. 31, 2002 photo. The minarets survived three decades of war but risk being toppled by road traffic—the last five medieval minarets are being slowly shaken to dust. REUTERS

Cars, not war, may finally topple Afghan minarets

By Mark Bendeich

HERAT, AFGHANISTAN—THEY survived three decades of war but risk being toppled by road traffic—the last five medieval minarets of Herat are being slowly shaken to dust.

The minarets are all that remain of what was once a wonder of art and architecture, a brilliantly decorated complex of Islamic learning and devotion on the Silk Road in western Afghanistan.

Little more than a century ago, more than a dozen of these minarets peered over the ancient city of Herat, part of a madrassa-mosque complex built in the 15th century by the daughter-in-law of the all-conquering mogul emperor Timur.

War and neglect have since toppled most of the camel-colored mud-brick towers, which were once sheathed in sparkling blue, green, white and black mosaic tiles, reaching heights of more than 30 meters and shining out across the desert.

But after US-led forces evicted the Taliban from national power in 2001, a relative amount of both peace and prosperity has returned to Herat and there are hopes that they can be preserved.

But there is one big problem: traffic.

Trucks and cars rumble along a busy road that runs right through the middle of the group of remaining minarets, shaking the ground and sending tremors through their foundations.

If it is not closed, there are fears that any of the minarets could crumble or fall in the coming years and decades.

One of them is already on a dangerous tilt.

"In the past five years, we tried to block the road going close to the minarets. Fortunately, we succeeded and blocked the road—for a little bit," said Ayamuddin Ajmal, who runs the Culture Ministry's historical monuments office in Herat.

But residents objected and the provincial government, unable or unwilling to invest in a road diversion, backed down, he said.

The road reopened.

"The government has also a commitment regarding preserving the minarets, but still we see that the government has not blocked the road," said Ajmal, who keeps a small office in a niche of another of Herat's treasures, the Friday Mosque.

The Afghan government has submitted the old city of Herat, including the minarets, as a candidate for listing as a World Heritage site. This would put Herat in the same class as China's Great Wall, the pyramids of Egypt and the Acropolis of Athens.

In theory, both central and provincial governments support the closure of the road to preserve the minarets, but in reality there is insufficient political will to do so.

The road has not only remained open, it has actually been widened in the past few years, said Brendan Cassar, a culture consultant for Unesco, the UN body that works with national governments to preserve sites of world cultural significance. *Reuters*

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Federer begins quest for Wimbledon mark/A26

Team Pilipinas close to peak form–Reyes

CHOT REYES IS CONFIDENT THAT HIS SAN Miguel-Team Pilipinas basketball squad will be in the shape it aspires for when the Fiba Asia Men's Championship comes around.

"Right now, we're getting close to being competitive," said Reyes.

The head coach of the national squad predicted that after the Jones Cup and the Invitationals to be hosted by the country next month, the Filipinos will be more than ready to do battle with Asia's best during the Fiba Asia in Tokushima, Japan.

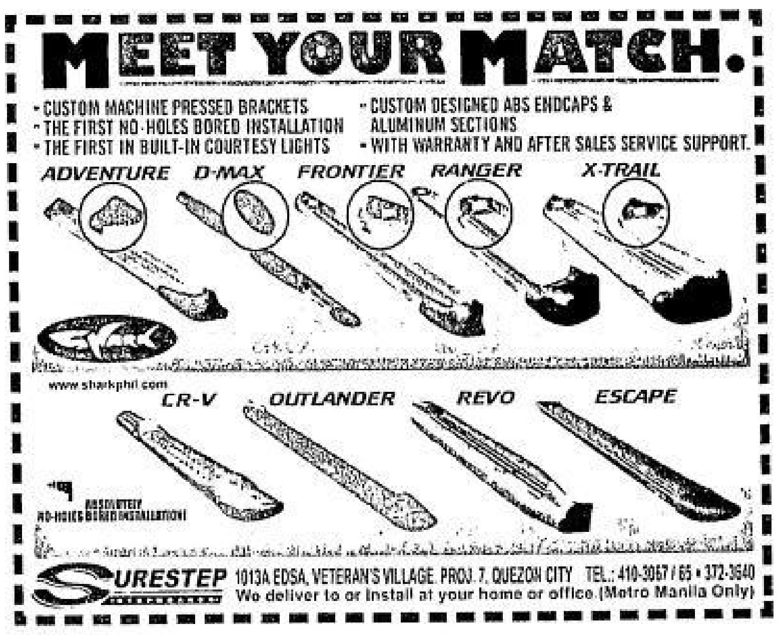
Reyes said the Nationals, who will be bracketed with the Chinese, Iranians and Jordanians in Group A of the Fiba Asia, were only 50-55 percent prepared for the competition after the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships.

After their Serbian stint, Reyes said the team has acquired a more focused mind-set apart from the new skills it learned after being roughed up by taller and heftier opponents during their week-long training camp in Belgrade.

"After Belgrade, I think we're now 20 percent away from being ready," said Reyes.

A "killer" schedule of nine straight games starting with an early confrontation with a United States team on July 2 awaits the Nationals in the Jones Cup.

TEAM/ A24



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Standard DOHC V6 Power and Available Four-Wheel-Drive Traction
The standard 2.7-liter, V6, 24-valve DOHC engine delivers 185 horsepower at 6,000 rpm and 250 Nm at 4,500 rpm. The engine gives the Grand Vitara a tow rating of 3,000 pounds – enough to haul light recreational boats, personal watercraft or motorcycles – ideally, Suzuki motorcycles. The Grand Vitara is fitted with an electronically controlled five-speed automatic transmission. Very capable off-road, it is equipped with an excellent approach, break-over and departure angles, and 7.9 inches of ground clearance, (7.4 inches for rear-wheel-drive models).

The Grand Vitara also offers a sophisticated available Four-Mode full-time four-wheel-drive system with two-speed transfer case. On the road, drivers have the security of full-time four-wheel drive, and when traveling off-road, drivers can use an interior-mounted switch to engage the center differential lock. If the going is really slow, the driver can select the Low (4L Lock) mode for low-speed power and traction.

Advanced Structural Engineering and Chassis Design
All Grand Vitara models feature a new, lightweight yet rigid unibody construction enhanced with a built-in ladder frame to offer the best of both worlds – a refined on-road ride and the rugged off-road performance expected from Suzuki SUVs. The structure is teamed with four-wheel independent suspension – MacPherson struts in front and a multi-link design in the rear – to provide precise handling both on-road and off-road. The Grand Vitara also features large, vented front disc brakes and rear drum brakes and power assisted rack-and-pinion steering.

Uncompromised Safety Features
Every Grand Vitara model is fitted with active safety features, including ABS with electronic brake-force distribution (EBD) and Electronic Stability Program (ESP)1, including traction control. The ESP uses a variety of electronic sensors to measure vehicle speed, steering wheel angle and yaw. This information is sent to a central controller that can intervene as needed. Under certain conditions, such as when unintended oversteer or understeer is detected, the system can apply individual brakes and reduce engine torque to help the driver maintain the proper cornering line. Together with the traction control system, the ESP helps ensure vehicle stability and optimum cornering, handling in take off or acceleration, emergency maneuvers, or driving on slippery road surfaces.

The Grand Vitara also features six airbags as standard equipment – driver and front passenger seat-mounted side-impact airbags supplemental restraint system (SRS), advanced dual-stage front airbag SRS, advanced weight-sensing front passenger airbag SRS and front and rear side-curtain airbags.

The three-point driver and front passenger seat belts feature shoulder height adjustment. In the rear seat, each passenger is provided with a three-point seat belt system and a headrest. The rear child-seat LATCH system (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children), along with rear-door child safety locks, are designed to help protect young rear-seat passengers. The innovative stamped steel unibody with built in ladder frame provides comprehensive protection, with features such as a reinforced cabin with the added safety of a head-impact protection padding and front and rear side-impact door beams designed to help maintain the integrity of the passenger compartment.

In the event of a collision with a pedestrian, the hood is designed to absorb some of the impact and help protect against serious head injuries. The front end and the bumper use energy-absorbing materials to help reduce the possibility of serious leg injuries.

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The Grand Vitara offers ample interior space for driver and passenger comfort and 24.4 cubic feet of storage space with the seats up or 68.9 cubic feet of storage space when the convenient 60/40 split seatbacks are folded forward. With its carefully engineered control layout and close attention to materials and fit-and-finish, the interior of the Suzuki Grand Vitara is functional and attractive. The list of standard features includes air conditioning with automatic climate control and micron air-filtration system, cruise control, digital clock with outside temperature, fuel consumption indicator and adjustable center armrest with internal storage. The Grand Vitara also features a standard AM/FM/CD/MP3 -capable audio system, and steering-wheel-mounted audio controls, and an available six-disc in-dash CD changer with six speakers, including two tweeters and a subwoofer.

For more information, visit www.suzuki.com.ph.

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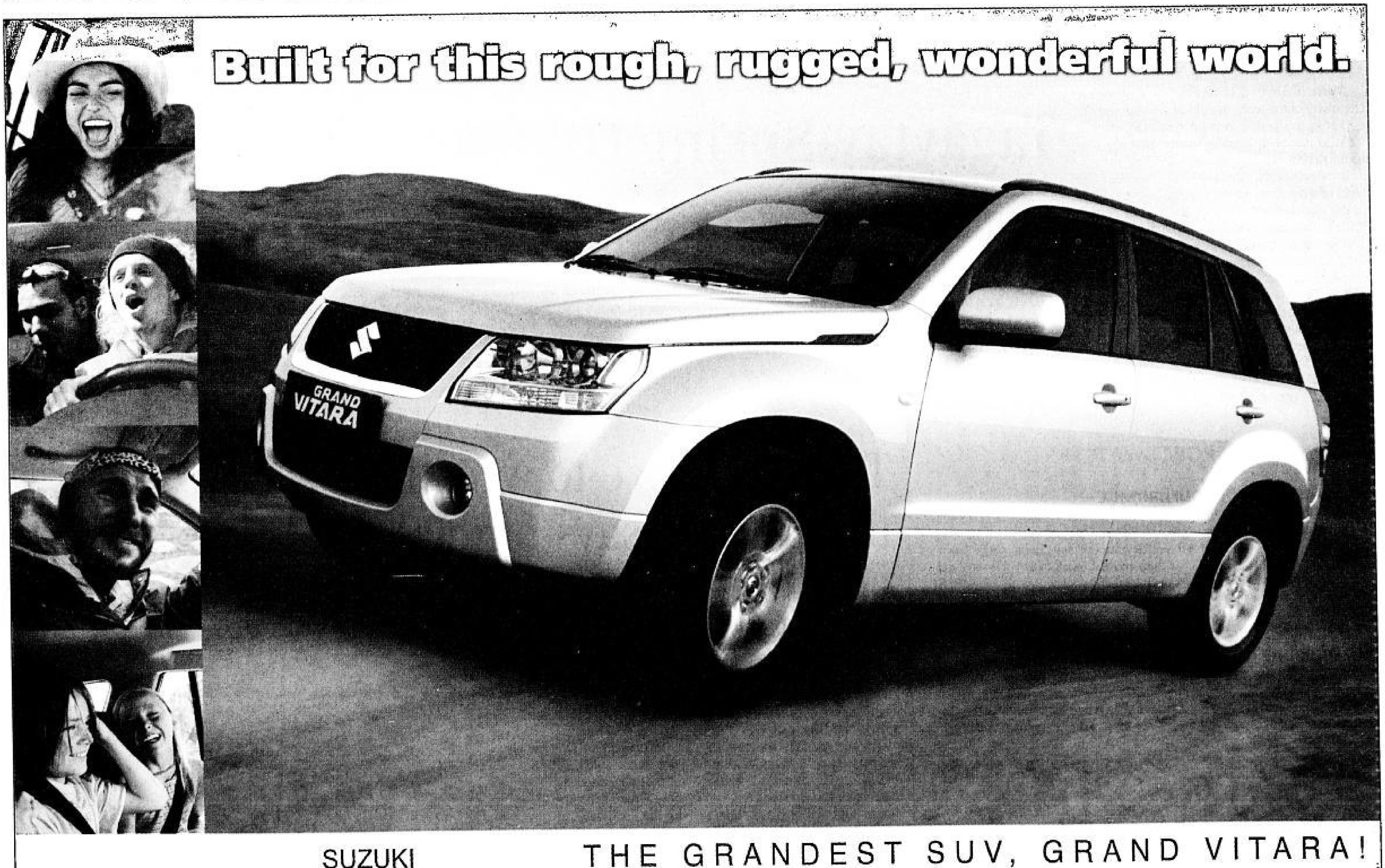

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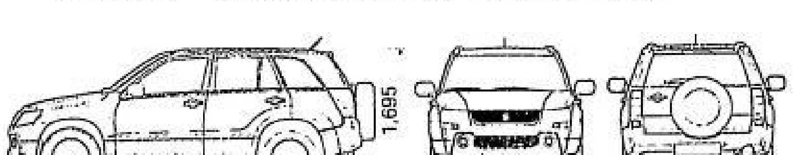

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Greenhills knocks out St. Joseph

GREENHILLS LADY SPIKERS KNOCKED OUT St. Joseph Quezon City, 25-18, 20-25, 25-13, to advance to the cross-over quarterfinal round of the 3 rd Shakey's Girls Volleyball League (GVL) Sunday at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym.

St. Joseph also bowed to bracket B topnotcher Prenza High School, 23-25, 25-18, 26-24, on Saturday.

St. Francis of Assisi, meanwhile trounced UP Integrated School, 25-10, 25-24, to also advance. San Beda Alabang took the last quarterfinal berth by beating Holy Spirit, 25-10, 25-21, in the event organized by Metro Sport's Freddie Infante.

In Bacolod, University of St. La Salle and Dona Hortencia Bacolod National High School of La Carlota hurdled their respective matches at the start of Shakey's Bacolod GVL.

Host University of St. La Salle upset defending Shakey's Bacolod GVL champion Dona Monserrati High School, 25-18, 22-25, 25-13, while Dona Hortencia Bacolod National High School of La Carlota beat St. Benilde School, 25-8, 25-13. *Marlon Bernardino*

Team . . .

From page A23

The Nationals face Lebanon on July 3, Japan on the 4th, South Korea on the 5th, Jordan on the 6th, Iran on the 7th, Chinese-Taipei on the 8th, Qatar on the 9th and Kazakhstan on the 10th.

"Tough, no matter how it plays out," said Reyes of the schedule. "I would have preferred USA later, but otherwise, it's fine."

Playing without rest in six days last week, the SMC-Team Pilipinas made up of Philippine Basketball Association stars dropped four of its six outings in Belgrade with Danny Seigle and Tony Dela Cruz being sidelined by injuries.

Reyes said Dela Cruz could suit up in the Jones Cup in Taipei starting next week while Seigle would have to sit it out to prevent the injury from being aggravated.

The addition of James Yap, Eric Menk, KG Canaleta and Kelly Williams for the Jones Cup will provide a much wider array of choices before Reyes names the final lineup after the Invitationals on July 12-15 where the RP team gets a glimpse of the Chinese, Lebanese and Syrian teams.

Reyes, however, is having second thoughts on adding new faces unused to amateur rules to the final composition of the team.

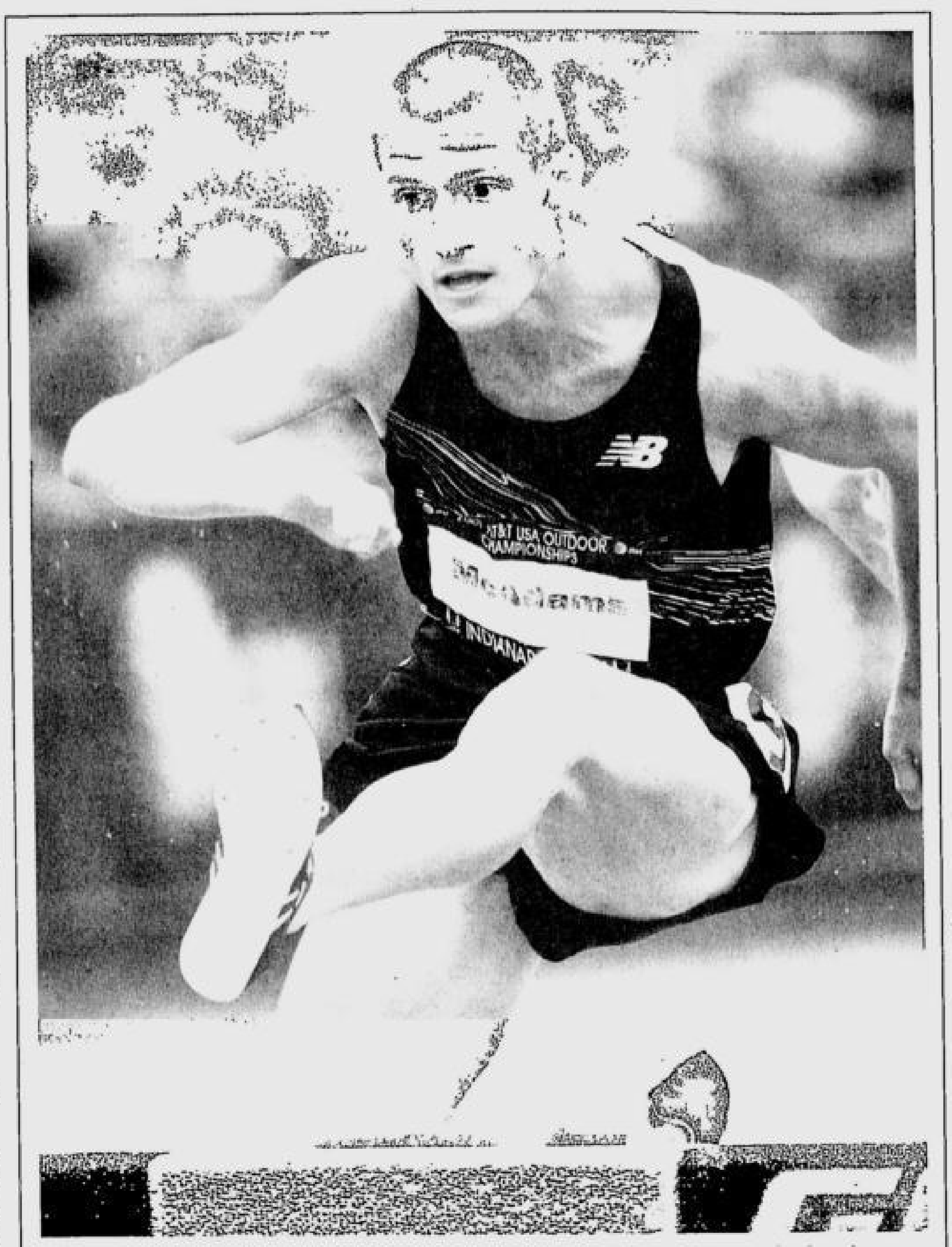
"We're striking a delicate balance of jarring the chemistry of the team. It's either we take the risk of putting in the new guys or stick it out with the 12 who has been training for us since the very start," said Reyes.

But Reyes admits that the Nationals are in dire need of a big man, another utility guy who plays in the slot and a shooter in addition to Renren Ritualo, Dondon Hontiveros and Marc Caguioa.

Reyes also assured that Gabe Norwood would complete his citizenship papers by the time the Fiba Asia comes.

"His (Norwood) papers are in. It's just a matter of submitting them to the proper channels. I met his grandma and cousins in Los Angeles and they are Filipinos like you and I," said Reyes.

After a few days rest following their Belgrade act, the SMC-Team Pilipinas jumped back to its twice-a-day training yesterday.



EASY DOES IT: Joshua McAdams of the US clears the hurdle en route to winning the men's 3000m steeplechase final at the US outdoor athletics championships Sunday at Mike Carroll Stadium in Indianapolis. AFP

Nat'l male gymnastics coach quits

By Dennis U. Eroa
Libre Sports editor

THE HEAD COACH OF THE NAtional men's gymnastics team since 1985 has resigned.

Santiago "Sonny" Ty, a former national gymnast who is on his 22nd year as the country's top male mentor, called it quits due to what he said were differences with Gymnastics Association of the Philippinees (GAP) secretary-general Dulce Saguisag.

TY

"Yes, I've resigned," said Ty, who holds a degree of Bachelor of Science in Education majoring in Physical Education at the University of the East.

He said that he was unable to personally inform GAP president Noel "Chuck" Buenaventura of his decision, but added he would file his official resignation letter anytime this week.

While he refused to elaborate on his reason for quitting, Santiago hinted that it was due to a conflict with Saguisag, who was appointed by Buenaventura this year.

He told the INQUIRER that he had already intimated to Buenaventura that he can't work harmoniously with Saguisag.

Saguisag told the INQUIRER she could not comment on Ty's resignation because she has yet to receive the official resignation letter.

"I can't really comment at this moment because I have not read his reasons," said Saguisag "He (Ty) called me up and said that he was quitting. I told him to study his decision very well."

"I've devoted my whole life to gymnastics and I've already cried about this decision," said Ty, who until yesterday was handling the training of Roel Ramirez for the Artistic World Gymnastics set Sept. 1-9 in Stuttgart, Germany which is a qualifier to the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Ty also refused to confirm reports that the whole national men's team is planning to boycott the GAP in a show of support, but added he had received some form of backing from the Nationals.

"From what I heard, Roel (Ramirez) had already expressed his alarm to Mr. Buenaventura regarding recent developments in the association," Ty said.

Before he resigned, Ty was at the helm of the country's preparations for the SEA Games.

In an earlier interview, Ty said Ramirez, a double-gold medalist in the 2005 Manila SEAG and a veteran of the Doha Asian Games, has a good chance of making the grade in Beijing and follow the footsteps of Norman Henson, a veteran of the 1968 Mexico Oympics.

"The records of the men's team in the various SEAG will bear us out. We never fail to deliver," said Ty.

Ty added that four gymnastics golds is attainable in the coming SEAG which will take place at the Nakhon Ratchasima Indoor Stadium on Dec. 6-9 and Dec. 11-14.

Aside from Ramirez's gold in the vault and floor exercises in the 2005 SEAG, Brydon Sy (parallel bars) and Kim Bun Yap (pommel horse) landed silver medals, while Brian Peralta (men's aerobic), Danica Calapatan (women's clubs and rope exercise), Raissa Saguisag (women's all-around artistic) and Al Ramirez, Neil Faustino, Ronnie Ramirez, Roel Ramirez and Sy (artistic team) picked up bronzes.

Airport Casino hosts P1-M poker tourney on Saturday

A GUARANTEED PRIZE OF P1 MILLION IS up for grabs in the No Limit Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament to be staged by Pacific Poker Palace (PPP) on June 30 at the Airport Casino Filipino in Parañaque City.

Ben dela Cruz, PPP's gaming director, said the tournament has drawn an international cast of poker champions.

The event is part of the series of meets leading to the $3-million PPP Poker International Tournament, reputedly the biggest poker event in Asia, in September.

Entry fee in the June 30 event is P2,000 and buy-in is P20,000. There is no re-buy and add-on.

Philippine poker legend Wally Sombero is again the top favorite to win the P1-million tournament. Other strong contenders are young guns Frederick Hernandez and Franco; and Korean ace Kim Il Kwon.

Organizers expect big names from the Americas, Europe and Asia to arrive as early as August.

Tagaytay-Spring Oil five grabs NBC lead

ILIGAN CITY—TAGAYTAY SPRING Cooking Oil banked on former pro Marlon Legaspi's heroics to nip Firefly-Iligan, 86-85, and grab solo leadership in the 2007 Spring-NBC National Cup basketball tournament Saturday at the MSU-IIT gym here.

Legaspi buried his fourth triple with 16 seconds left to provide the difference in the cliffhanger.

The Crusaders of Mayor Lawrence Cruz, who are also being supported by former senator Ralph Recto, bungled their last play, enabling the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and league VP Mayor Bambol Tolentino to tally their ninth win in 12 games.

"It's good my veterans stepped up and our defense did not crack in the stretch," said Spring coach Efren "Yong" Garcia.

Iligan dropped to 8-4 in the tourney supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Yahoo Philippines, San Miguel Beer, Caltex, Sun Cellular, Firefly Lightings, Trans Asia Shipping Lines, Molten, Nature's Spring, Basketball TV and Viva Prime Channel.

Legaspi led all scorers with 20 points. He also finished with six rebounds, three steals and two blocks.

The Cooking Oil Masters squandered an 11-point lead when Harold Sta. Cruz and Nat Cruz sparked a fierce Iligan rally. Nani Epondulan and Legaspi fought back for Spring, but the Crusaders still managed to inch ahead, 85-83. Shortly, Legaspi sank his last trey to settle the issue.

Action resumes tomorrow with Pagadian facing crosstown rival Ozamiz at 7 p.m. at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym in Ozamiz City.

The scores:

TAGAYTAY 86—Legaspi 20, Epondulan 17, Bolocon 11, Mallari 9, Reyes 9, Tajonera 6, De Castro 5, Victolero 4, Cuenca 0

ILIGAN 85—Sta. Cruz 14, Cruz 14, Saladaga 13, Go 12, Hardin 11, Kalaw 11, Mangahas 6, Guiyab 0, Marata 0, Cabili 0, Gatchalian 0

Quarters: 15-19, 40-40, 60-52, 86-85

SPORTSWATCH

DLSU-media golf tournament

GREEN ARCHERS CHIEF TERRY CAPISTRANO, PHILIPPINE STAR SPORTS EDItor Lito Tacujan and George Barcelona won the team competitions in the just concluded De La Salle U-media golf at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. The trio submitted a net 201 to beat the 207 of Andy Reyes, Steve Gan and Musong Castillo. Bulletin sports editor Ding Marcelo won the sportswriters division with a net 61 followed by INQUIRER Golf editor Jong Arcano with a net 66 via countback. Rey Bancod, Tempo sports editor, and Tacujan placed third and fourth, respectively. Capistrano is the president of TMS Shipping.

6th Makiling Challenge registration on

REGISTRATION IS NOW ONGOING FOR THE 6TH GARGOL MAKILING CHALlenge, the annual racing event that gives runners a chance to compete in the Sun-Herald City2Surf Run in Sydney, Australia, a 14km run from the City of Sydney to the shores of Bondi Beach. For details, visit www.makilingchallenge.tk or text 0920-835 6605.

FRIENDSHIP CUP: Ronnie and Kristine Co of Federal Tyres (center) are shown with the players from Taiwan and Grace Christian High School Alumni Association (GCHSAA), headed by playing coach Bonnie Tan. The Taiwanese beat GCHSAA, 78-75, in their Friendship Cup basketball match at the Xavier gym in San Juan recently.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Wild Orphan (3), Lovely Tara (8), Kalashnikov (4) Gold Fever (1), Kapit Bahay (10)

Race 2—(Ort/Tri)—Modern Classic (1), Mapagkwento (3), Hepburn (5), I Don't Dance (2)

Race 3—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Five O'Clock (9), Mas Que Nada (10), Virgin Island (2), Reporter (3), Yao Man (7)

Race 4—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Apple Splash (10), June Siete (14), Friendly Fire (2), Time Deposit (1), Reason To [illegible]

Race 5—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Rebound (7), Heart of Jonna (8), Reign of Roses (6), Perfect Time (5), Lady Cathy (2)

Race 6—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Pound For Pound (8), Ger Francis (4), Business Class (3), Condoleeza (1), Regal Chief (6)

Race 7—(Ort/Tri)—Celestial (5), Infinite Passion (1), Flying Strike (2), Cool Turner (3)

Race 8—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Raise A Dancer (8), My Lady Hannah (11), Red Hot Water (10), Boss Lady [illegible]

There's more to wrestling than WWE, says official

By June Navarro

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BElief, professional wrestling, the one that features Dave Batista and a host of star wrestlers in the United States, is not the sport that traditionally sees action in the Olympics.

For one, the fight scenes are scripted. And if you ask Vincent Piccio what he thinks, there's no doubt that the wrestling chief will brand it more than just a phoney.

"It's (professional wrestling) destroying the sport," said Piccio. "Professional wrestling is not even a sport. It's purely entertainment."

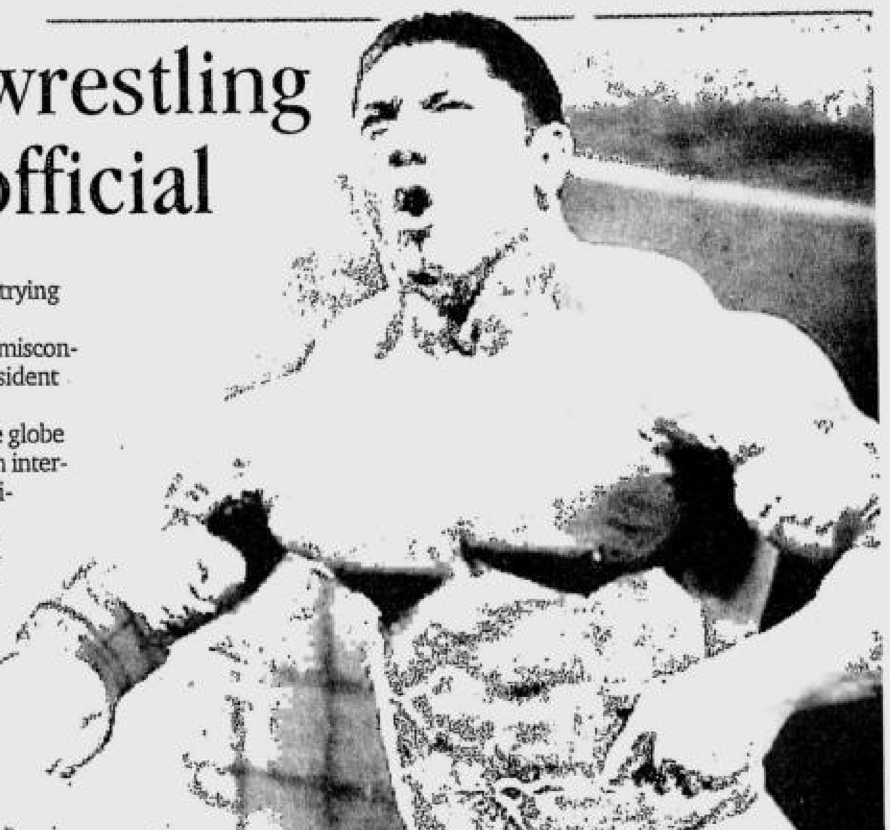
Piccio swears that people shy away from the sport because of the made-for-TV version, making it doubly difficult for the Wrestling Association of the Philippines to recruit potential athletes and sustain its development programs.

"The parents normally dissuade their children from trying out the sport," said Piccio.

In an effort to curb the misconception, the wrestling president will bring in around 300 wrestlers from around the globe when the country hosts an international wrestling championships next month.

Piccio said the national wrestlers would compete in the tournament as part of their exposure for the Southeast Asian Games while hopefully getting new ideas on the various techniques.

The national team will see action in different weight categories in greco-roman, freestyle and women's freestyle. While the chances of winning for the men are slim to none, Piccio said the women wrestlers could pull off some surprises.



FILIPINO Greek Dave Batista is one of the certified crowd drawers of the World Wrestling Entertainment.

Sultan loses WBF welter title via TKO in France

DONDON SULTAN OF THE PHILIPPINES yielded his WBF welterweight title with a ninth-round technical knockout loss at the hands of France's Hamza Issa.

Sultan had Issa in deep trouble in the fifth round, bombarding the French with several shots but could not put away the challenger.

According to Sultan's manager Sammy Gelloani, Issa took control starting in the eighth, then upped his attack in the ninth as referee Alfred Asaro stopped the fight while Sultan was on the ropes. *Salven Lagumbay*

25 Olympic bets off for China Thursday

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION yesterday stressed the importance of sending national athletes for training abroad as it confirmed the departure of a 25-man delegation to Guangzhou on Thursday for a two-month course in a top-notch international training camp.

PSC chair Butch Ramirez said the 20 athletes and five coaches from diving, weightlifting, wushu and fencing will undergo rigid preparation as part of the 2008 Beijing Olympics build-up.

"We can't over emphasize the value of foreign training. That includes mental toughness. There is no soft training when you are preparing for the Olympics," said Ramirez.

His statement contradicted with an earlier stand by the Philippine Olympic Committee which batted for local training of athletes because it "is cheaper" and better than the allegedly jail-like nature of training in foreign camps.

"In fairness to our counterparts in China, we have seen these facilities before with (wushu's) Francis Chan and it's almost like a three-star hotel," added Ramirez. "China has better if not the best sports facilities in the world, that's why they are superpowers in sports."

Ramirez, who came from a week-long trip from Cuba, said the barometer of the country's Olympic readiness was still a foreign exposure and China "is willing to help us realize our dreams of an Olympic gold medal."

Three-time Southeast Asian Games gold winner Shiela Mae Perez will lead the diving team along with fellow SEAG gold medalists Nino Carog, Jaime Asok, Rexel Ryan Fabriga, Kevin Kong, Zardo Domenios and new recruits Fil-Canadian Dhayna and Nicole Lemay. Brian Palattao and Rodolfo Pahoyo will be their coaches.

Weightlifting will be represented by promising lady lifter Hidilyn Diaz and coach Ramon Solis, wushu has Benjie Rivera, Eduard Folayang, Marianne Mariano, Mary Rose Estimar, Willy Wang, Janice Hung and coaches Liu Yu Fu and Ding Bao Yu.

Fencing won't have any coaches in tow but will be represented by Rolando Canlas, Veena Tessa Nuestro, Gian Nocom, Joanna Franquelli and Walbert Mendoza.

SHEILA MAE PEREZ

V-L title pix clears up today

THE TWO TITLE SLOTS REMAIN WITHIN reach of four teams in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament.

San Sebastian and Lyceum clash at 2 p.m. today, while University of Santo Tomas and De La Salle collide at 4 to wrap up the semifinal round at The Arena in San Juan City.

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena*)
2 p.m.—San Sebastian vs Lyceum
4 p.m.—La Salle vs UST

Lyceum, San Sebastian and UST--locked in a three-way tie at 7-3—remain in the running for an outright championship berth.

The winner between San Sebastian and Lyceum will clinch the solo lead and march to the Finals if UST drops its match versus La Salle.

UST can also clinch the first Finals berth with a win over La Salle plus a higher quotient over the winner of the Lyceum-San Sebastian tussle.

The league will employ a quotient system rule if two teams finished tied at 8-3.

In the current quotient tabulation, San Sebastian leads with a 1.139 game point ratio, followed by UST at 1.126 and Lyceum at 1.003.

The team that slides to the second spot, however, will not gain automatic entry to the Finals.

La Salle, 6-4, sustained its bid for a fourth straight title by clinching a playoff berth for the second Finals slot last Sunday.

Both the Lady Archers and the Tigresses bagged the bonus by winning three straight semifinal matches, a feat that awarded them a playoff slot for the second championship seat.

Under the tournament's 3-of-4 incentive rule, a team that wins three of its four semifinal assignments is assured of a Finals playoff.

The Tigresses, who have dropped only one set in the semis, are favored to extend their winning streak behind the solid performances of Mary Jean Balse, Venus Bernal and guest players Suzanne Roces and Rubie de Leon.

Jasmine W. Payo

HEADER: Brazilian Anderson heads the ball during a training session in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, Sunday. Brazil will face Mexico in their first match of the Copa America Wednesday. AFP

Orcollo prevails over Park

FILIPINO ACE DENNIS ORCOLLO BEAT 2002 Busan Asian Games 8-ball gold medalist Park Shin Young of Korea, 11-6, in the finals to emerge champion in the Bill Staton Memorial Tour held June 22-24 at the Q Masters Billiards in Virginia Beach, US.

Orcollo, who bowed to Canadian John Morra in the second round received, the top purse of $3,000 according to AZbilliards website yesterday. Park, on the other hand settled for runner-up honors worth $2,000.

The 28-years-old Orcollo is fresh from winning the 2007 Enjoypool.com BCA 9-ball tilt recently.

Jeff Abernethy took third place while Larry Nevel went home fourth.

Former US Open champion Gabe Owen finished fifth while US-based Filipino Al Lapena wound up ninth. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

MVP gives RP boxing solid boost

By Dennis U. Eroa
Libre sports editor

IT'S NOW THREE Bs for Manny V. Pangilinan—basketball, badminton and boxing.

The sports-loving owner of telecommunications giant PLDT has finally agreed yesterday to support amateur boxing as it pursues the country's bid to nail a first ever gold for the country in next year's Beijing Olympics.

"MVP gave the assurance that amateur boxing can count on him," announced Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap)president Manny T. Lopez yesterday.

"Abap wishes to thank MVP for his commitment and promises to work with him to bring glory to the country," added Lopez in a statement.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez had earlier announced that Pangilinan is being tapped to help amateur boxing in its bid to nail the elusive Olympic gold after coming close to nailing it two times in 1964 and 1996.

But while MVP has pledged his support, Lopez said the owner of the Talk 'N Text team in the PBA and the host of the annual gathering of some of the world's badminton stars here during the MVP Cup had asked him not to stop looking for other sponsors.

In an earlier interview, Lopez lamented that boxing has not been getting enough support from the private and government sectors.

"The lack of sponsors is frustrating sometimes because everybody will agree that our boxers may gift the country its first Olympic gold. With MVP's commitment, Abap can now breathe easily and concentrate on the tough task ahead," said Lopez.

Boxing emerged as the best performing National Sports Association during the Doha Asian Games after it went home with two gold medals. The Philippines also dethroned Thailand as boxing king of the Southeast Asian Games during the 2005 event in Bacolod City.

SSC Staglets down Altalettes in NC jrs

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IS A THREE-PEAT IN THE OFFING?

That sure looked like it with the way San Sebastian thrashed Perpetual, 106-67, yesterday to touch off its bid to extend its NCAA juniors basketball reign at the Arena in San Juan.

Ryan Buenafe unloaded 27 of his 36 points in the first half, while Arvie Bringas exploded with 23 to underscore the Staglets' determined bid this season after ruling the competition the past two years.

The 6-foot-3 Buenafe also finished with nine rebounds, eight assists and seven steals.

"In my opinion, Ryan and Arvie are the finest high school players in the country," said SSC junior coach Raymond Valenzona.

CSB-La Salle Greenhills debuted with an 81-64 win over Letran.

Marco Yulo had 20 points and six rebounds while the Junior Blazers limited the Squires to just four points in the fourth quarter, all of them from Kevin Alas, son of Letran senior team mentor Louie Alas.

FIRST GAME

CSB-LSGH 81—Yulo 20, Mart. Reyes 14, Dela Paz 13, Nicolas 11, Mig. Reyes 8, Marc. Reyes 8, Malimban 4, Asuncion 2, Quebral 1. Seno 0, Mars. Reyes 0, Dimaculangan 0.

LETRAN 64—Ke. Alas 25, Noble 16, Khobuntin 7, Relorsado 5, San Jose 4, Munsayac 4, Castillo 3, Roxas 0, Romeo 0, Javier 0, Bagsit 0, Kr. Alas 0.

Quarters: 21-16, 37-37, 62-60, 81-64.

SECOND GAME

SSC-R 106—Buenafe 36, Bringas 23, Gusi 19, Santos 5, Ortuoste 4, J. Delgado 4, Andrada 3, F. Delgado 2, Cam 2, Bautista 2, Ramsey 2, Mamaril 2, Laconico 2, J. Delgado 0, Estrada 0.

PERPETUAL 67—Valentin 18, Jolancob 13, Mancio 8, Dizon 7, Manzanero 7, Mojado 5, Biscocho 5, Pagkalinawan 4, Dejaresco 0, Pabillano 0, Francisco 0.

Quarters: 27-16, 57-44, 79-55, 106-67

GYMNASTICS legend: Romania's Nadia Comaneci graces the celebration of the 2007 Special Olympics kick off at the CCP Complex in Pasay City. At left is 57-year-old Eugune Ng, who has Down Syndrome. Comaneci, the first to score a perfect ten in an Olympic gymnastics event is currently vice chair of the Special Olympics International. LYN RILLON

Kings retain FIBL crown

THE FILIPINO-INDIAN BASKETBALL LEAGUE (FIBL) defending champion Kings ended the title dreams of their opponents, the Knights, in grand fashion. Beaten in double-overtime in Game 2 of the best-of-three championship series for the FIBL Ambassador's Cup, the Kings routed the Knights, 90-57, in the decider at the Philsports Arena Sunday night. Kings part-owner and coach Mike Advani bagged the Coach of the Year award. Rajest Chandumal led the scoring for the Kings with 17 points. Rakesh Chandumal had 12, league and championship MVP Manoj Chandumal chipped in 11 while Sanjeev almost had a triple double with 9 points, 12 rebounds, and 11 blocks. Chand Daryanani led the Knights with 23 points but got little support from Mukesh Mohnani who was limited to 10 points. FIBL Commissioner Dilip Budhrani and Counselor Tsewang Namgyal of the Indian Embassy awarded the 2007 FIBL Ambassador's Cup trophy to the Kings.

Amateur boxing dilemma

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IT IS DISTRESSING TO KNOW that the some of the biggest and most profitable business firms in the Philippines have yet to come to the aid of amateur boxing, the country's brightest hope to win an Olympic gold next year in Beijing.

I am increasingly concerned with the lack of corporate sponsors because the national boxing team has already missed three international events so far, namely the prestigious King's Cup in Thailand last April, a tournament in Germany last month and the just-ended Asian Boxing Championships in Mongolia.

"We failed to join these tournaments because of budgetary constraints and lack of sponsors," said Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines.

I find it totally incomprehensible for amateur boxing to be still looking for corporate sponsors at this stage since the Abap is the most bemedalled National Sports Association in the history of the Olympic Games.

Under the exemplary leadership of the late sportsman-businessman Eugenio Puyat, the Philippines won its first Olympic silver medal in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics when Anthony Villanueva lost a close and controversial match against Russia's Borislav Stepashkin. Then in the 1996 Atlanta Games, with Manny Lopez at the helm, Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco duplicated that silver-medal finish, losing a cliffhanger to Bulgaria's Daniel Petrov Bojilov. So close was the decision that many ringsiders commented, "It could have gone either way."

I respect the people who run amateur boxing. They care about the boxers by taking every precaution to ensure their safety. And there are no glib-tongued, greedy and scheming promoters that they have to deal with.

Meanwhile, Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez estimated that about P250 million would be needed for the 2008 Beijing Olympic preparation. However, Ramirez said a big part of the budget would only be earmarked for those athletes with good chances of performing decently in Beijing.

* * *

Veteran internationalist Marlon Manalo, 31-year-old mainstay of Puyat Sports, has been tapped to see action in the fourth leg of the Guinness 9-Ball Tour on July 13-15 in Singapore. According to Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines president Ernesto Fajardo, Manalo, runner-up in the 2007 BSCP National Open, will join double world champion Ronnie Alcano of Bugsy Promotions and his stablemates Jeffrey de Luna, 2006 Doha Asian Games silver medal winner; and this year's Scandinavia 9-Ball champion Roberto Gomez. Unlike last year when Filipino cue artists dominated the Asian series, players from Chinese-Taipeh are now lording it over the field, ruling the legs in Indonesia, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Meanwhile, flamboyant Francisco "Django" Bustamante, another Puyat Sports mainstay, is on a roll. The 44-year-old Bustamante recently won the Hard Times Summer Jamboree 9-Ball championship in Sacramento, California, upending reigning US Open winner John Schmidt, 11-8. The victory was the second in three months for the Filipino hotshot since capturing the UPA 9-Ball Tour last April at the Normandie Casino in Los Angeles by beating American legend Johnny Archer.

Earlier, 2004 World Pool champion Alex Pagulayan topped the 4th Annual World Summit of Pool by making mincemeat of American Shane Van Boening, 7-5, at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. "I couldn't ask for more," said billiards benefactor Aristeo "Putch" Puyat. "Alex is not out of place with the likes of the great Efren (Efren "Bata" Reyes). Alex confirmed beyond doubt what we already knew, that he is in a class of his own."

* * *

Congratulations to a longtime friend, hotelier Biboy Enriquez, and his partners Joel Fernando and Paul Dominguez for setting the pace in the "Cocker of the Year" race under the aegis of the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines at the Makati Coliseum. After scoring an impressive 10 straight wins in the last two derbies, Biboy's Firebird Jimafer BJ entry led the COTY race with a total of 37.5 points. Kudos likewise to sabong idol Patrick Antonio and son, Tony, for emerging the 2007 NCA (National Cockers Association) "Cocker of the Year" at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Seedings List

WIMBLEDON, England—Seedings for the men's and women's draw at Wimbledon from June 25-July 8 (world rankings in parentheses):

Men

1. Roger Federer, Switzerland (1)
2. Rafael Nadal, Spain (2)
3. Andy Roddick, United States (3)
4. Novak Djokovic, Serbia (5)
5. Fernando Gonzalez, Chile (6)
6. Nikolay Davydenko, Russia (4)
7. Tomas Berdych, Czech Republic (11)
8. Andy Murray, Britain (8), withdrew
9. James Blake, United States (9)
10. Marcos Baghdatis, Cyprus (16)
11. Tommy Robredo, Spain (7)
12. Richard Gasquet, France (12)
13. Tommy Haas, Germany (10)
14. Mikhail Youzhny, Russia (14)
15. Ivan Ljubicic, Croatia (13)
16. Lleyton Hewitt, Australia (19)
17. David Ferrer, Spain (15)
18. Jarkko Nieminen, Finland (21)
19. Jonas Bjorkman, Sweden (31)
20. Juan Carlos Ferrero, Spain (18)
21. Dmitry Tursunov, Russia (24)
22. Guillermo Canas, Argentina (17)
23. David Nalbandian, Argentina (26)
24. Juan Ignacio Chela, Argentina (20)
25. Carlos Moya, Spain (22)
26. Marat Safin, Russia (25)
27. Philipp Kohlschreiber, Germany (28)
28. Robin Soderling, Sweden (29)
29. Agustin Calleri, Argentina (30)
30. Filippo Volandri, Italy (27)
31. Dominik Hrbaty, Slovakia (34)
32. Juan Monaco, Argentina (33)

Women

1. Justine Henin, Belgium (1)
2. Maria Sharapova, Russia (2)
3. Jelena Jankovic, Serbia (3)
4. Amelie Mauresmo, France (4)
5. Svetlana Kuznetsova, Russia (5)
6. Ana Ivanovic, Serbia (6)
7. Serena Williams, United States (7)
8. Anna Chakvetadze, Russia (8)
9. Martina Hingis, Switzerland (9)
10. Daniela Hantuchova, Slovakia (10)
11. Nadia Petrova, Russia (11)
12. Elena Dementieva, Russia (12)
13. Dinara Safina, Russia (13)
14. Nicole Vaidisova, Czech Republic (14)
15. Patty Schnyder, Switzerland (15)
16. Shahar Peer, Israel (16)
17. Tatiana Golovin, France (17)
18. Marion Bartoli, France (20)
19. Katarina Srebotnik, Slovenia (21)
20. Sybille Bammer, Austria (22)
21. Tathiana Garbin, Italy (23)
22. Anabel Medina Garrigues, Spain (24)
23. Venus Williams, United States (31)
24. Alona Bondarenko, Ukraine (25)
25. Lucie Safarova, Czech Republic (26)
26. Ai Sugiyama, Japan (27)
27. Samantha Stosur, Australia (28)
28. Mara Santangelo, Italy (29)
29. Francesca Schiavone, Italy (30)
30. Olga Poutchkova, Russia (32)
31. Michaella Krajicek, Netherlands (33)
32. Martina Muller, Germay (34)

AP

ROGER Federer sets sights on Bjorn Borg's five Wimbledon crowns. At right is Britain's Andy Murray. AP

Federer begins quest for Wimbledon mark

LONDON—ROGER FEDERER begins his quest to emulate Bjorn Borg's record of five successive Wimbledon titles on Monday at an All England Club that has undergone a few changes.

The citadel of grasscourt tennis is in a state of transition and for the first time since 1922 there will be no roof over Centre Court.

The club is in the midst of a three-year modernization project which includes building a retractable roof over the main show court and Federer expects a battle with the elements as well as with his opponent Teimuraz Gabashvili when he plays his first match on grass for 12 months.

Among the other changes fans can look forward to is the introduction of Hawkeye technology.

Players will be allowed three incorrect challenges per set using the electronic line-calling system and the results will be played back on giant screens on Centre and Court One.

The screens, however, could come in handy to entertain the spectators as rain is forecast for most of the opening week of the grasscourt slam.

Amelie Mauresmo will not begin the defence of her title until Tuesday against American Jamea Jackson but she is already well versed in the main requirements needed to win a Wimbledon crown.

Weather permitting, Henman is expected to follow Federer on to Centre Court for an intriguing meeting with former French Open champion Carlos Moya.

Third seed Andy Roddick was left to curse his luck when he was drawn in the same half as Federer.

But before the American can even start looking towards narrowing a 13-1 losing record against the Swiss in a possible semi-final showdown, he will have to negotiate compatriot Justin Gimelstob.

Justine Henin has been unstoppable for the past month and will be carrying an 11-match winning streak into Wimbledon when she begins her campaign to complete her collection of grand slam titles.

Former champions Serena Williams and Martina Hingis will also be eager to test their grasscourt form but may end up twiddling their thumbs in the locker rooms because the opening day's schedule is expected to be a washout. *Reuters*

Hurting Murray pulls out

LONDON—BRITAIN'S ANDY Murray has pulled out of the Wimbledon tennis championships, which start on Monday, having failed to recover from a wrist injury.

The British number one has not played since suffering a micro-tear in a tendon in his right wrist at the Hamburg clay court tournament on May 15.

Murray had planned on leaving the decision on his participation at the All England Club until after his practice session on Monday.

But after an indoor session at Roehampton on Sunday, the 20-year-old announced he would not risk further damage to his wrist by taking on Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti in the first round.

A statement from Murray read: "I have done everything possible to get ready for Wimbledon. I have played practice sets the last few days but still cannot hit a topspin forehand properly.

"It has been six weeks of really hard work but I'm not 100 percent ready. The wrist is a very important part of tennis and there are a number of players who have made the decision to come back too soon and ended up with long-term injuries and I do not want to take the risk and make the same mistake.

"The doctor has advised me not to play and that I probably need about 10 days to be ready. Unfortunately, I don't think it is going to rain for the next 10 days.

"I love playing Wimbledon because of the great support I get from the British public and that is what I will miss the most." *AFP*

Ochoa rallies with eagle, seizes 3rd win of year

PITTSFORD, NEW YORK—World No. 1 Lorena Ochoa rallied from a three-shot deficit with two holes to play to win her third title of the year on Sunday in a sudden death playoff at the Wegmans LPGA.

South Korean rookie In-Kyung Kim started the day one behind Ochoa, but finished in a tie at eight-under 280 after shooting 72 to the Mexican's 73.

In sudden death, Ochoa made a par at the second extra hole—the par-4 10th—to repeat her 2005 win at Rochester.

It was the perfect warmup for the US Women's Open, starting at Pine Needles, North Carolina, on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Kim had been three ahead of the field on the 17th, but Ochoa cut the margin to one when she eagled the long 17th with an 18-foot putt.

At the tough par-4 18th, Kim hit her second through the green and failed to get up and down for par. At the second extra hole, she drove into trees.

South Korea's Mi Hyun Kim was third, firing a 69 for 281, and American Cristie Kerr was fourth, a further shot back after a 71 for 282. *AFP*

LORENA Ochoa gets sprayed with champagne after her victory. AFP

HUNTER Mahan: $1 million richer. AFP

Mahan gets first PGA Tour title

CROMWELL, CONNECTICUT—HUNTER Mahan registered his first PGA Tour victory Sunday, winning the six million-dollar Travelers Championship in a playoff.

Mahan, who finished second at this event last year, sank a short birdie putt on the first playoff hole to beat fellow American Jay Williamson.

The victory gave Mahan, who finished the tournament at 15-under-par 265, the first prize of 1.008 million dollars.

Mahan entered Sunday a shot behind Williamson, then took over the lead with three birdies on his first 10 holes.

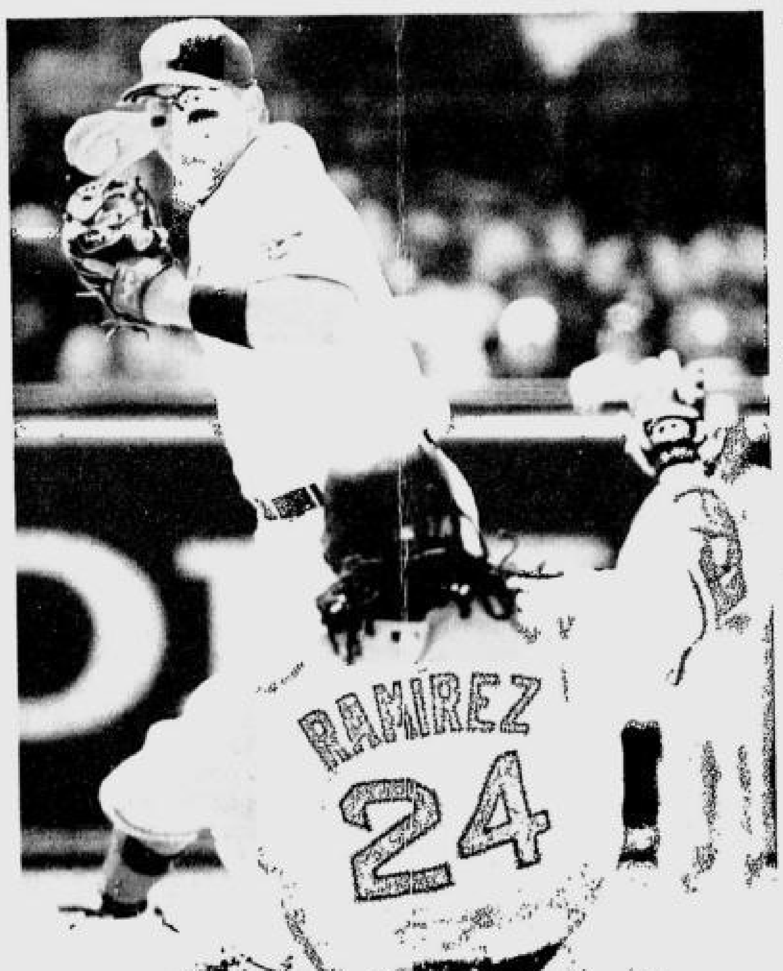
"Yeah, I played the first few holes on the back just awesome, I played them perfect. Couldn't ask to hit a lot of better shots. But that's golf. You have to keep battling. It's 18 holes and you have to keep working and keep working. It's not over until it's over."

But consecutive bogeys on 16 and 17 put him a stroke behind Williamson, forcing Mahan to make a seven-foot birdie putt on 18 to force the playoff.

In the playoff, Mahan hit his approach within 12 inches and Williamson missed his birdie putt from seven feet, giving Mahan the win.

"I was thinking ... all you have to do is knock this in, and it doesn't matter what he did and I just hit it low," Williamson said. "I wasn't out of gas, emotionally, but I was on empty."

Australian Nick O'Hearn finished third, four strokes back after a final round 66 that included four birdies over the front nine. *AFP*



OUT: Second baseman Geoff Blum of the San Diego Padres throws to first to complete a double play after forcing out Manny Ramirez of the Boston Red Sox Sunday at Petco Park in San Diego, California. The Red Sox won, 4-2. AP

Yao to marry longtime sweetheart in Shanghai

Bride-to-be Ye stands 6-3

SHANGHAI—CHINA'S ALL Star NBA centre Yao Ming will wed his teenage sweetheart from Shanghai in August, after an eight-year courtship, state press reported Monday.

YAO MING

Yao, who has kept his love life closely guarded from the media, will marry Ye Li in a private family ceremony possibly in Shanghai, the eastern metropolis where they were born, met and began dating, the Titan Sports Weekly said.

"This is a match based on pure love," the paper said.

The 2.26 metre (seven-foot-six-inch) centre first met Ye in 1999 when he was playing for the Shanghai Sharks men's team and the 1.9 metre Ye was with the club's women's team.

Ye has since gone on to play for the national side, but has been plagued with injuries in recent years.

The two were seen walking hand-in-hand at the closing ceremony of the 2004 Athens Olympics, when their courtship first became public.

According to Titan Sports, Ye, 25, has been a regular at Yao's home in Texas where he stars for the Houston Rockets. She has also studied English at the University of Houston.

Yao, 27, is expected to return to China in July to train and will play matches with the national team in September.

The paper played down widespread rumors on the Internet and in the Chinese media that Yao's wedding would be broadcast live on television, with China's Olympic gold medal-winning hurdler Liu Xiang acting as the master-of-ceremonies.

"On that day there will be no media, basically it will only be relatives from both sides attending," the paper said.

"Yao Ming and Ye Li are doing what they can to protect themselves. They do not want to see any outside factors interfering." *AFP*

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Gov't revises profit-sharing plan for mining

DENR says move to attract more investors

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL Resources has issued a new fiscal regime for foreign-owned mining projects that imposes a single profit-sharing scheme.

The DENR said the government and the mining contractor would each get 50 percent from the net mining revenues after the recovery of the proponent's capital investment.

Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said this reform on "benefits sharing" for mining projects was part of the government's revitalization program to make the Philippine minerals industry more attractive to investors.

"This reform is crucial to firm up the competitiveness of the Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement or FTAA as a form of a mining contract, while at the same time (ensuring) that the government and the communities get their proper share of benefits from such mining projects," Reyes said.

Reyes recently signed Department Administrative Order No. 2007-12, which contains the guidelines defining the new fiscal regime covering the FTAAs.

An FTAA is a contract between the government and mining companies for the large-scale exploration and development of minerals, which allows up to 100-percent foreign ownership in a mining project.

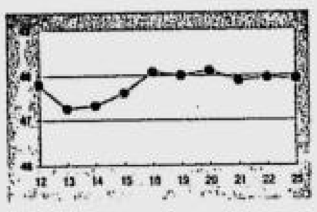
Under the previous fiscal regime, there were three options available for FTAA projects—the cumulative net cash flow option, the additional profits option and the net mining revenue option.

"By retaining only the net mining rev-

GOV'T/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JUNE

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

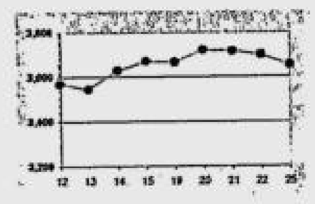
P 46.075 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., June 25, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

JUNE



Stocks end 1.29% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.29-percent lower yesterday as investors cashed in on recent gains, tracking the weakness in other markets in Asia after US

STOCKS/ B2

Gov't to cut price of Iloilo property

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE said the government was willing to lower the price of the old Iloilo airport after none of the previous bidders was willing to pay at least P1.2 billion for the 54-hectare property.

A finance official in charge of privatization said the government would lower the floor price to help push through with the asset sale before the end of the year.

The old Iloilo airport was included in the list of assets targeted to be privatized this year. The property was bid out last May 9 with three firms participating in the bidding—Robinsons Land Corp., Empire East Properties Inc. and SM Prime Holdings.

No one met the floor price set by the government, forcing privatization officials to declare a failed bidding.

Robinsons submitted the highest bid of P1.09 billion. Empire East offered P701 million, while SM Prime bid only P435.79 million.

The P1.2-billion floor price was disclosed to the bidders only after they submitted their bids in the afternoon of May 9. The DOF said that having kept the floor price secret until the bids were submitted was a strategy to encourage participants to submit the highest bid they offer.

Following the failed bidding, the DOF said it was giving all three bidders the option to match the P1.2-billion floor price after the amount had been disclosed. But none of them responded to the challenge to match.

The finance official said the government was now open to lower the floor price and schedule another bidding date for the property.

He said the government was legally prohibited from simply awarding the property to Robinsons, although it offered the highest bid.

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Vista Land shares gain 48% on listing at the PSE

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

VISTA LAND AND LIFESCAPES INC., the newly incorporated holding firm of the Villar Group, listed 6.4 billion shares yesterday, making it among the top 40 stocks in terms of market capitalization, the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) said.

Vista Land, which trades under the symbol "VLL", replaced C&P Homes Inc. whose trading in the stock market has remained suspended as of yesterday.

Vista Land has a total of P23.3 billion worth of shares listed on the stock exchange at its closing price of P3.65 yesterday, data from the PSE showed.

Vista Land closed at its high of P3.65 on total trades of 1,000 shares only. Its closing price was 48.37 percent higher than its offer price of P2.46 apiece.

Vista Land's 1-for-1 stock swap and tender offer were priced at P2.46 a share, which was also set as the initial listing price of Vista Land yesterday. C&P Homes last traded at P4.05 per share.

Vista Land earlier received the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission for its planned public offering of up to 3.89 billion shares.

The firm plans to sell up to 2.12 billion new shares through a primary or new shares offer while up to 1.26 billion shares will be offered by shareholders Fine Properties Inc., Polar Property Holdings Corp. and Adelfa Properties Inc.

The shares will be priced at an estimated range of P3 to P10 a share. The final offer price has yet to be set.

Net proceeds from the primary offer at an assumed offer price of P6.50 a share, which is the midpoint of the estimated range of the offer shares, will amount to P13.2 billion, the company said, citing SEC documents.

Gov't ...

From page B1

enue option, the DENR believes that it will result in a more equitable sharing of benefits where the contractor gets a reasonable return of investments while the government gets its reasonable share from the utilization of the country's mineral resources," Reyes said.

Reyes assured the public that "the new fiscal regime is nothing less than a fair deal for all stakeholders of FTAA projects."

Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Horace Ramos said in a phone interview that the net mining revenue option seemed to be the best option among the three to ensure equitable sharing between the government and mining sector.

According to Ramos, they have been formulating this since 2004 and have found that the main concern of mining companies was whether or not the order would be retroactive.

However, Reyes assured that the new guidelines would apply only to future FTAAs and would not cover existing contract holders.

There are currently two approved FTAAs—the Didipio Copper-Gold Project of Oceana Gold in Nueva Vizcaya and the Tampakan Copper Project of Sagittarius Mines Inc. in South Cotabato.

Stocks

From page B1

stocks slid on Friday, dealers said.

A plan by the Philippine Stock Exchange to review 15 capital-deficient companies as part of efforts to weed out unwarranted stock price speculation also dampened investor sentiment, they said.

The composite index lost 47.58 points at 3,653.58. The broader all-share index fell 25.96 points to 2,349.75.

Losers clobbered winners 98 to 31, while 45 stocks ended unchanged.

A total of 6.7 billion shares worth P4.2 billion were traded. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 25, 2007)

52-WEEKS HIGH	52-WEEKS LOW	STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.2	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	12.75	13	12.25	12.75	145,700
71.5	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	71	71	70	70.5	745,500
73.5	45.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	71.5	71.5	70.5	71.5	616,700
935	630	China Banking Corp.	920	930	920	920	8,120
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20	20	20	20	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.57	0.62	0.57	0.58	65,670,000
75.5	30.5	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company	73	73	71	71.5	834,100
65	32.5	Philippine National Bank	62.5	63	62	62.5	104,200
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	65	65	65	65	200
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	36	36.5	35.5	36	1,792,500
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	83.5	84.5	83.5	84.5	82,000
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	62.5	63	62.5	63	68,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
3.81	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	135,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.36	1.4	2,325,000
12.75	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.25	12.75	11.25	12.5	2,820,800
1.3	0.4	First Abacus Financial Hldg Corp.	1	1.3	0.99	1.14	6,130,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	1,000
1,710.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,650.00	1,660.00	1,650.00	1,660.00	610
5	4.05	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.45	4.5	4.4	4.45	4,051,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	3	3.1	3	3	1,658,000
1,005.00	210	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	855	855	820	840	4,360
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,120.00	2,130.00	2,120.00	2,130.00	660
1.94	1.2	iVantage Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.78	1.82	1,302,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
67.5	41	First Gen Corp.	66.5	67	66	67	665,300
88	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	86.5	87	86	86.5	776,600
12.75	7	Manila Water Company Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.25	11.5	4,063,900
102	14	Manila Electric Company A	98.5	99	98	99	165,700
104	20.5	Manila Electric Company B	100	101	99	101	803,900
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.5	7,140,000
5.8	3.5	Petron Corp	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	5,885,000
1.9	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.62	1.62	1,199,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	451,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.34	2.6	2.32	2.55	9,747,000
8	1.9	Central Azucarera De Tarlac	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	1,000
2.75	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.66	2	1.66	2	54,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26	26.5	120,200
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	54.5	55	54	54.5	84,500
1.9	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.72	1.74	1.66	1.66	769,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.42	2.5	2.42	2.5	310,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. A	71.5	73.5	71.5	73.5	326,000
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. B	77.5	79	77	78.5	1,134,800
0.61	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	580,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.75	2,243,900
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.8	1.27	EEI Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	746,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	650,000
7	1.2	Republic Cement Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	42,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Hldng Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.76	1.78	2,258,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.8	944,000
2.5	2	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	6,000
1.4	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.32	1.38	320,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
7	5.1	Panasonic Manufacturing Phils. Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	10,000
0.44	0.06	Picop Resources Inc.	0.4	0.44	0.39	0.41	91,940,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	241,000
0.165	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.14	0.155	240,130,000
1.28	0.18	APC Group Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.14	1.14	40,001,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.8	2.8	2.65	2.75	498,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	20,000
0.018	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	158,100,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	103,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.7	6,596,000
0.021	0.007	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.019	0.021	0.018	0.02	2,627,600,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.1	6.2	5.9	6	63,371,000
1.38	0.47	Alsons Consolidated Res Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.24	1.26	1,091,000
1.5	0.085	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.3	1.14	1.3	607,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	2,564,000
5.6	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	20,000
16	4.5	Atok-Big Wedge Company Inc. A	12	12	12	12	500
590	275	Ayala Corp.	570	570	560	560	236,740
6.9	0.7	Balabac Res and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.65	385,000
5.4	0.99	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.1	5.1	4.95	4.95	14,793,000
9.8	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.1	9.1	8.9	9	2,284,000
2	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. A	1.9	2	1.9	2	83,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.4	1,002,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	3	3	3	3	218,000
14.5	5.5	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	160,600
0.8	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.7	0.7	70,000
0.95	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.75	0.8	0.75	0.76	130,000
30	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	26	27.5	25.5	26.5	1,676,700
11.5	0.25	Multitech Investments Corp.	10.25	10.75	10	10.25	11,786,800
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.85	3.7	3.85	795,000
0.038	0.009	Pacifica Inc. A	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.035	80,400,000
1.54	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.16	272,000
0.75	0.16	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.63	0.63	17,800,000
1.92	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	32,000
432.5	200.44	SM Investments Corp.	432.5	432.5	405	405	218,860
2.2	0.71	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	55,000
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.63	26,080,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.92	1,500,000
1.6	0.76	South China Resources Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	260,000
0.75	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.62	0.63	8,280,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Company Inc	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	380,000
1.06	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.92	0.94	1,500,000
19.25	8.96	Ayala Land Inc.	18	18	17.5	17.75	30,265,000
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.78	1.82	1.76	1.8	6,629,000
4.7	1.86	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	60,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	118,000
0.72	0.25	Crown Equities Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.67	0.67	7,070,000
0.83	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.7	0.72	0.7	0.71	19,900,000
3.25	0.72	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	400,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.92	70,790,000
0.32	0.03	Ever Gotesco Res and Hold'gs Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	9,740,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.2	1.22	22,366,000
2.44	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.3	2.32	2.24	2.3	42,598,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	68,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	50,700,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	51,100,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.49	6,920,000
1.12	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	1.06	1.06	0.97	1	8,537,000
4.4	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.05	4.05	33,907,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	40,000
0.7	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.62	0.63	6,480,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.74	0.76	0.72	0.75	46,430,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	9	9.2	7.5	7.5	1,691,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	20.5	20.5	20	20.25	923,700
5.7	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.5	2,150,000
12	5.76	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.5	11	11.25	11,273,700
1.34	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.14	1.16	23,742,000
0.36	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	8,610,000
3.65	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	1,000
		MEDIA					
34	14	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	6,300
1.14	0.98	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	10,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.62	1.62	2,508,000
1,445.00	900	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,375.00	1,375.00	1,360.00	1,360.00	194,010
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,650.00	2,650.00	2,630.00	2,640.00	33,330
7.9	3.2	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	609,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	19,050,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.2	12	9.2	10.75	721,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7.2	7.2	7	7	4,524,000
0.065	0.0274	ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0525	0.055	150,900,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.42	2.44	2.34	2.34	162,000
0.185	0.04	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.15	0.155	275,660,000
2.08	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	145,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.065	0.0675	363,300,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.35	3,635,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	1,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6	6	6	6	90,000
32	13.25	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	29.5	29.5	29	29.5	440,400
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.02	2.02	2	2	314,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	3.8	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	1,000
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.85	96,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	6,000
0.98	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Prod'n Inc.	0.87	0.87	0.83	0.84	7,720,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	1	1.06	0.98	0.99	1,870,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	1,700
5.3	1.88	Macroasia Corp.	5	5	4.95	4.95	358,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16.25	16.5	16	16	444,900
30	9.8	Paxys Inc.	25	26.5	24.75	25	3,305,900
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.016	632,000,000
7.6	3	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.1	6.1	5.9	5.9	533,000
7.7	3	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	6.1	6.1	6	6	580,000
21.25	7.3	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	17.5	17.5	17	17	2,920,700
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	9,000
35	20	Benguet Corp. B	27	27	27	27	2,500
5	1.7	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	1,000
3.05	0.0624	Geograce Resources Phil. Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.8	2.8	72,170,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.3	0.31	0.29	0.31	8,840,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.35	2,030,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.035	0.036	0.035	0.035	69,600,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	53,800,000
0.024	0.008	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	264,400,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	5,448,000
29.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28.5	28	28.5	20,000
1.36	0.32	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	7,094,000
1.8	0.5	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.42	4,164,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.24	Basic Petroleum Corp	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.49	18,510,000
0.025	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	60,000,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	92,200,000
29	1.5	PNOC Exploration Corp. B	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	2,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	44,200
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	509,400,000

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ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE AFP BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), through the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) Number D-07-05906, intends to apply the sum of THIRTY EIGHT MILLION FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (Php 38,400,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the corresponding contract for the *Supply and Delivery of two (2) units Rig Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIB)* for the Philippine Navy. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through the GHQ BAC1, now invites prospective Bidders for the project below:

Item Nr	Nomenclature/Activity	Approved Budget for the Contract	Price of Bid Documents	Delivery Schedule
	GHQ BAC1-MOD-PN-09-07 Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) with ILS Package	Php 38,400,000.00	Php 12,000.00	To be delivered w/in 100 days upon opening of Letter of Credit (LC).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws and regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who would be determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from AFP Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday excluding holidays.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee. The method of payment will be on cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The AFP BAC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **9:00 a.m., July 5, 2007 (Thursday)** at Silid Panday Pira, G/F Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on **9:00 a.m. July 19, 2007 (Thursday).** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any form and corresponding amount allowed under RA 9184 and its IRR-A. Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be on **9:00 a.m., July 19, 2007 (Thursday)** at Silid Panday Pira, G/F Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. Only offers or bids from prospective bidders who are the manufacturers, distributors or suppliers or their duly authorized representatives shall be entertained. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking similar contracts within the last five (5) years with at least three (3) similar contracts having an aggregate cost equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC of the project; and the largest of these similar contracts must be equivalent to at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the ABC of the project to be bid.

10. To facilitate checking, prospective bidders who are the manufacturers, distributors or suppliers or their duly authorized representative who wish to participate in the public bidding may apply for registration with the AFP BAC, through the GHQ BAC1 Secretariat, as early as possible but not later than three (3) days prior to the schedule submission and opening of bids.

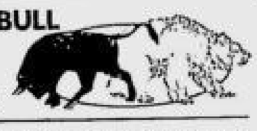
11. The AFP reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract without incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the AFP Bids and Awards Committee
G/F Bulwagang Syquio
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Contact Person: ***Ms. Edna B. Malonzo***
Tel. Nr: 911-6001 Loc 6486/6487
Fax Nr: 911-6001 Loc 6485
Email add: malonzo499@yahoo.com.ph

(Sgd.) RADM ALFREDO D ABUEG JR AFP
Chairman, GHQ BAC1

(PDI - June 26, 2007)

Bear Bull on Bear Stearns



MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I SUGGESTED TO MY WIFE THAT tonight we should change positions. She said, "I would really like that. Tonight, you stand by the ironing board while I lay on the couch and watch TV."

Three bachelors were kidding Bill Clinton about having only one child. He replied, "My wife is unbearable, inconceivable, impregnable, insurmountable and inscrutable." He thought that was hilarious.

Most women's fantasy is to have two men at once, one cooking and one cleaning.

I asked my wife where she wanted to go for her anniversary. She said, "Somewhere I have never been." I suggested, "How about the kitchen?"

A guy came home early and found his wife in bed with another man. "What the hell are you doing?" shouted the irate husband. "See," said the wife to the man lying beside her. "I told you he doesn't know a thing about sex."

Teacher: Cheryl, give me a sentence starting with I.

Cheryl: I is ...

Teacher: No, Cheryl. Always say, I am.

Cheryl: I am the 9th letter of the alphabet.

Two blondes walked into a building. You would think that at least one of

MR. BEARBULL/ B5

CURRENCIES

June 25, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.742556	1.000000	46.1000
Japan	Yen	0.005997	0.008076	0.3723
United Kingdom	Pound	1.484443	1.999100	92.1585
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095022	0.127966	5.8992
Switzerland	Franc	0.604146	0.813603	37.5071
Canada	Dollar	0.694691	0.935541	43.1284
Singapore	Dollar	0.482806	0.650195	29.9740
Australia	Dollar	0.629818	0.848176	39.1009
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.969853	2.652801	122.2941
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.197994	0.266638	12.2920
Brunei	Dollar	0.481242	0.648088	29.8769
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000111	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.023111	0.031124	1.4348
UAE	Dirham	0.202188	0.272287	12.5524
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.346700	62.0829
Korea	Won	0.000800	0.001078	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.097440	0.131222	6.0493
Argentina	Peso	0.240777	0.324254	14.9481
Brazil	Real	0.385944	0.519751	23.9605
Denmark	Kroner	0.134370	0.180956	8.3421
India	Rupee	0.018312	0.024661	1.1369
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215171	0.289771	13.3584
Mexico	New Peso	0.068528	0.092286	4.2544
New Zealand	Dollar	0.569226	0.766577	35.3392
South Africa	Rand	0.104393	0.140586	6.4810
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022673	0.030534	1.4076

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—June 22, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of June 22, 2007

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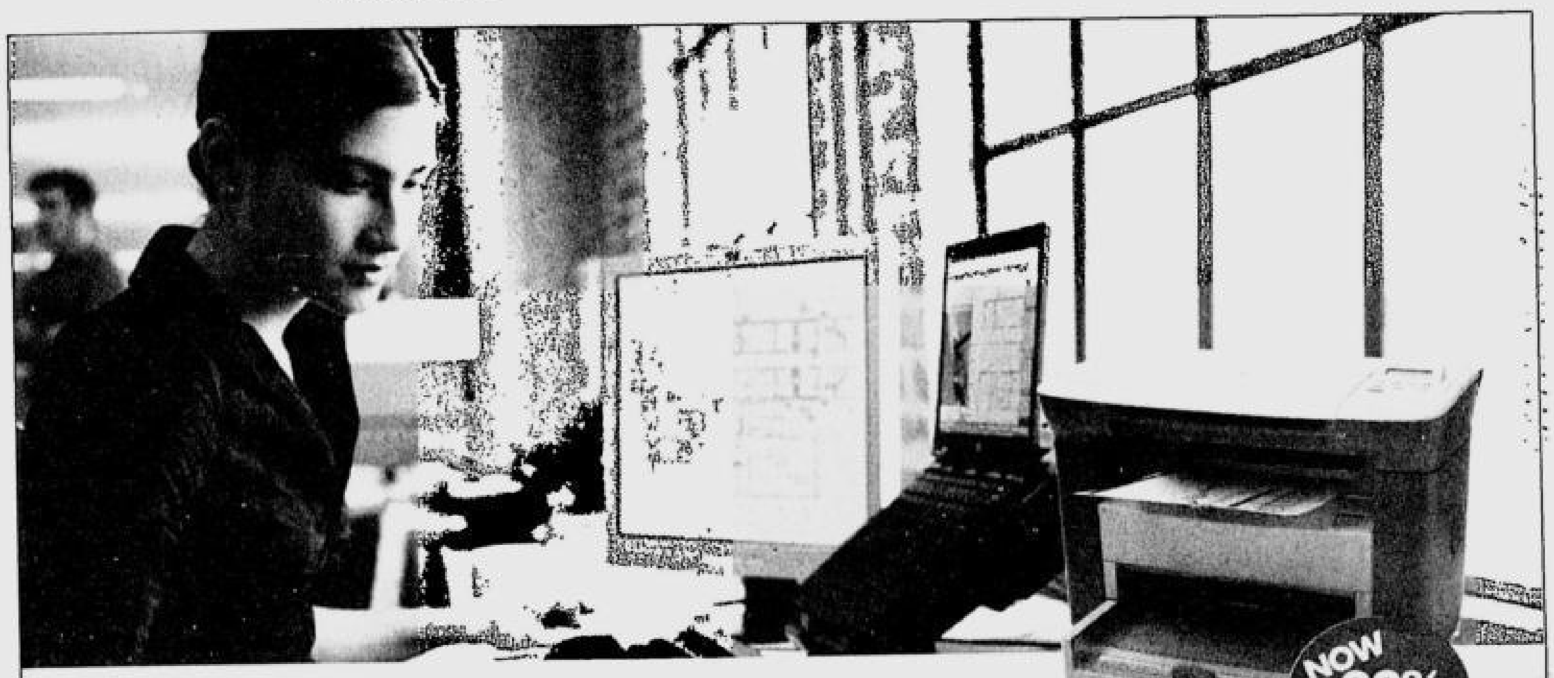

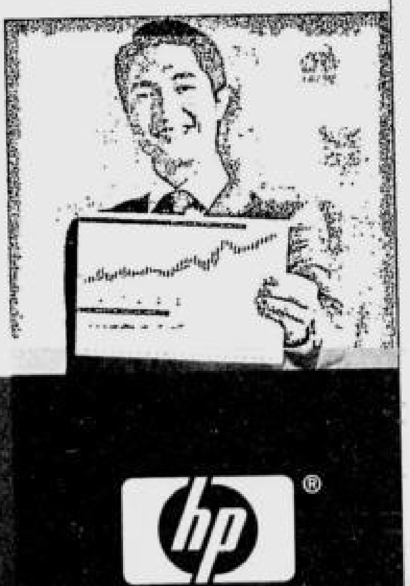

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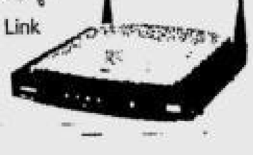

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Money supply growth rate seen hitting below 20%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS EXpects growth in money supply to slow down to below 20 percent before the end of the year following the implementation of tightening measures.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo told reporters that the monetary authority was already seeing signs that the growth in money supply would slow down, and that it could even fall below the targeted level of 20 percent within the year.

Money supply, as measured by the M3, has been posting year-on-year growth rates of more than 20 percent in the past months. In April, the growth was recorded at 26.4 percent.

M3, a broad definition of money, includes cash in circulation, demand deposits, savings accounts, time deposits and repurchase agreements.

According to the BSP, liquidity growth of more than 20 percent, although indicating increased economic activity, was worrisome because it could lead to the breaching of the government's inflation targets. Accelerated inflation, in turn, leads to lower purchasing power of consumers.

Last May, the BSP implemented tightening measures intended to temper the growth in domestic liquidity. These included allowing trust departments of banks to directly deposit funds in the central bank. State-owned firms are encouraged to park their funds with the BSP by offering them special interest rates, which are higher than the rates on comparable government securities.

Earlier estimates showed that more than a month after the implementation of the tightening measures last May 10, the BSP had already taken in P200 billion worth of additional deposits.

The BSP has set an inflation target of 4 to 5 percent this year, and between 3 and 5 percent next year. As of May this year, the five-month average inflation was at 2.7 percent.

Although the average inflation as of May was still benign, monetary authorities said it was prudent to control liquidity growth to below 20 percent to ensure inflation targets would be met.

The implementation of the tightening measures, however, were partly blamed by finance officials for an uptick in the interest rates on government securities.

Nissan may expand business in RP

Firm plans to make vans with high local content

By Daxim L. Lucas

SINGAPORE—JAPANESE AUTOMAKER Nissan may expand its operations in the Philippines through its local partner after President Macapagal-Arroyo assured the company's chief of continued government support for the auto industry.

On top of this, Nissan is also interested in the assembly of light vans with high local content level in the Philippines.

These developments came to light after President Arroyo met with Nissan and Renault president and CEO Carlos Ghosn during the two-day World Economic Forum in this island state.

They were joined by the president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Elizabeth Lee, who is also senior vice president of Universal Motors Corp., the Philippine partner of Nissan.

"There is a possibility of expansion [of Nissan's operations] in the Philippines," she told reporters after the meeting, but explained that the plan was still at an early stage.

Lee said, however, that her firm would expand and strengthen its assembly operations for completely knocked-down (CKD) auto units in response to strong auto sales, brought about by the resurgent economy.

"We're experiencing the highest growth [in auto] sales right now," she said. "Things are looking up."

Amid the bullish outlook for local auto sales, Lee said Campi continued to seek government's support for local assemblers and parts manufacturers.

In particular, she said low-cost parts manufacturers in the Philippines needed more funding support from the government for them to be able to improve their operations.

"Basically, we need incentives," she said.

With government support, Lee said local manufacturers would be able to supply more automotive parts either to assemblers overseas or to vehicle makers in the country.

"Their quality is up to par," she said. "They just need more support."

Already, Campi is holding discussions with the government for possible tax incentives to lower the cost of vehicles, allow members to expand their markets and improve their profitability.

Franchise scams worry local group

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP OF HOMEGROWN FRANchisers yesterday warned the public about scams as franchising continually and increasingly becomes popular among budding entrepreneurs and even old hands.

Ricardo Cuna, president of the Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc., said more and more unscrupulous individuals were taking advantage of the trend, especially to victimize first-time business owners who wanted to try a venture with very minimal birth pains.

AFFI groups at least 85 established businesses available for franchising, including well-known brands like Figaro Coffee, Bobson (jeans and apparel), Fiorgelato (ice cream), Happy Feet (reflexology), Candy Corner, Cellular City, Kiss King of Balls, Lots'a Pizza, Reyes Haircutters and Rice in a Box.

Cuna said "scam boys" were very skillful in selling their so-called 'business concepts,' complete with business models and one or two existing outlets for show.

"They normally copy an existing successful business concept, put their registered business name on it then sell the entire 'business package' as a franchise even without a proven track record of viability," he said.

Cuna said victims were lured into the scam because of very low franchise fees.

"They accept down payments from just anybody (not even screening the applicants because they are only after the money," the AFFI president said. "Then they leave the unsuspecting franchisees to fend for themselves."

"They do not have any support in terms of marketing, logistics, personnel training, systems, experiential and infrastructure," he added. "They give franchising a bad name."

Cuna offered the following tips to help rookie business owners avoid scams:

- The business must have been in operation for at least one year;
- It must have the support services such as a commissary, head office, operations support, marketing support, HR/training support, supply and logistics support;
- Interview existing franchisees (and watch out for tell-tale problems);
- The company must be a member of a credible franchise association like AFFI;
- Ask for an advanced copy of the franchise agreement, analyze it (including any fine prints) then have it reviewed by your lawyer, and
- Make sure the franchise will match the location and market environment you have in mind or already available.

"To avoid scams, make sure that the franchise being offered to you has a good track record, complete with a support organization," Cuna said. "It should have successful stores and outlets already running in established locations."

"As a potential franchisee, you must not be in a hurry to dive into a franchise, especially those offered by glib-tongued individuals, lest you lose your lifetime savings," he added. "You must do your own homework and research first."

Cuna explained that as an advocate of responsible franchising, AFFI has a very stringent screening process for membership applicants to ensure that only credible members are accepted.

Otto Energy seeks partners

By Abigail L. Ho

AUSTRALIA'S OTTO ENERGY LTD. IS seeking new partners for its three service contracts in the country, following the exit of former joint venture partner Vital Resources Corp.

In a statement to the Australian Stock Exchange, the company said the Calgary-based Vital now had no stake in Service Contract 51 in the East Visayan Basin and SC 55 in Palawan, "with no refund or reallocation of payments made to date."

For SC 50 in Northwest Palawan, Vital will retain a 1-percent working interest. Otto Energy, however, will hold the Canadian firm's voting rights in the joint venture.

"Otto intends to complete the current Trinity seismic program across all three Filipino license areas as planned, and then seek a new farm-in partner(s) for the projects prior to commencing the exploration drilling campaign," the disclosure states.

The company recently finished gathering 116 square kilometers of 3D seismic data over the Calauit and Calauit South fields covered by SC 50, paving the way for the preparation of a concrete drilling plan.

Seismic vessel CGG-Veritas Pacific Sword had now started gathering 954 kilometers of 2D seismic data over SC 55. Data gathering over this area was already 50 percent complete as of June 12.

After SC 55, the seismic vessel would move to Otto Energy's SC 51 petroleum blocks to gather 145 square kilometers of 3D and 261 kilometers of 2D seismic data.

"This situation creates an opportunity for Otto to use the current 2D and 3D seismic programs to add significant value to our blocks prior to negotiating a new farm-out deal pre-drilling," Otto Energy chief executive Alex Parks said.

"There has been a lot of interest in our acreage, and in the Philippines in general, with new entrants to the area—Exxon, Japex, Petronas, Tap Oil, Salamander Energy and Pearl Energy. I am confident Otto will be able to find one or more alternate farm-in participants," he added.

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Department of Labor-NCR Page A8
AFP Modernization Program Page A9 & B2
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53RD ANNIVERSARY OF DNR DANCE AND BALLET STUDIO.

A simple celebration marked the 53rd anniversary of the DNR Dance and Ballet Studio, with a summer recital of its three level ballet groups — kinder, beginner and advance. 'The show must go on' was the theme of the night, nursing Albay's grief, after typhoon Reming struck its fury to this peaceful and beautiful city. The Studio Dance Group poses with its teacher, Dehlia Napay-Rebustillo, after the recital on May 26.

Providing Filipinos dance education

THE DANCE SCHOOL AT DBC ISAS CONSERVATORY TRAINING develops musicality, artistry, and performance quality, developed by clean and strong technique. The school offers a stimulating curriculum taught by highly experienced teachers and internationally renowned guest artists.

The school is the only institution in the country that offers multiple dance syllabi. It offers the study of Cecchetti Ballet, National Dance, and Royal Academy of Dance. The school holds accreditations from international dance organizations such as: Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (Cecchetti Ballet and National Dance); Royal Academy of Dance (London); Ceccheti Ballet Australia; Canada's National Ballet School. Its founder and director Desiree Peralejo earned a DCPMA in Dance at the University of the Philippines. She also carries a BA in Fine Arts Cultural Studies from York University, Canada. She then trained at Canada's National Ballet School under the Teacher Training Program earning her teaching qualifications for the I.S.T.D. (Cecchetti Ballet Society, and National Dance), R.A.D. (RTS), and NBS-TTP Dip.

Individuals who are interested in dance education and training should visit the DBC ISAS Conservatory for registration and information. The conservatory also offers intensive training in Music, Visual Arts and Creative Writing. Please contact: www.dbcisas.com, inquiry@dbcisas.com, 30 Balimbing Street Valle Verde 1 Pasig City, 0917- 880 ISAS (4727), (02) 671-2676, (02) 671-2632.

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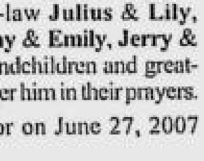
**On the 25th Death Anniversary
of our Beloved Father**



JAMES V. LIMPE

Pasay City
December 2, 1906 - June 27, 1982

We, his family, children and children-in-law **Julius & Lily, Gloria (†) & Maning (†), Anna, Betty, Anthony & Emily, Jerry & Lucy, Bessie, Lilian & Richard** and all his grandchildren and great-grandchildren request the pious readers to remember him in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered in his honor on June 27, 2007 (Wednesday) at the following churches:

Immaculate Conception Parish .... 6:00 P.M.
Antipolo Cathedral

St. Jude Archdiocesan Shrine .... 6:00 A.M.
San Miguel, Manila

Our Lady of Sorrow Church .... 6:00 A.M.
2150 F.B. Harrison, Pasay City

San Isidro Parish Church .... 6:00 A.M.
1830 Taft Avenue, Pasay City

National Shrine of Sacred Heart .... 6:00 A.M.
Sacred Heart Street, San Antonio Village

Malate Catholic Church .... 6:00 A.M.
1016 M.H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila

San Lorenzo Ruiz Minor Basilica (Binondo Church) .... 6:00 A.M.
Plaza Calderon, Binondo, Manila

Santisima Trinidad Parish .... 6:30 A.M.
1127 Estrada St., Malate, Manila

"Our father is gone, but his presence and guidance have never left us and we will continue to cherish him for as long as we live. God has our dearly beloved father in HIS keeping, and we have him in our hearts forever."

JOVITA CUA CASTAÑEDA

peacefully joined our Lord and her husband
***Primo Vergara Castañeda** on June 23, 2007*
at the age of 89.

Her children **Norberto** and **Adora, Digna** and **Ramon Sales, Lucila** and **Manuel Yangco, Milagros** and **Roy Canoy, Anabella** and **Verne Quiazon, Ramon, Rene, Carlos** and **Fe, Alex** and **Shirley, Henedina** and **Jerry de Leon, Ernesto** and **Gay**; grandchildren and great-grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria Della Strada Parish, Katipunan Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on June 27, 2007 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

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Your cheating hurts

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

LISTEN TO THIS, JUST LISTEN TO this: Napocor has been cheating us, the public—including those 11 million poor people—to the tune of some P155 billion.

And that was only for 2005 and 2006!

Nobody as yet can say for how much Napocor wants to fleece us this year. It is keeping the figure close to its big cheating heart.

You see, in the past couple of years of the peso's strength against the dollar, Napocor kept the so-called "forex rate" gains to itself all along.

The gains amounted to P65 billion in 2005, and P90 billion in 2006.

Look, ma, the peso already gained substantially against the dollar so far this year.

Despite the good showing of the peso these past years, our beloved state-owned power monopoly did not lift even a little dirty finger to lower its power charges.

Now, when the exchange rate goes the other way around, and the peso is losing against the dollar, Napocor increases its rates in no time—as if it's automatic.

And do you know what Napocor did with the forex gains of the past couple of years?

Yes, sir, Napocor simply booked the forex gains (i.e., our money) as "profit."

That made Napocor, and of course its president, Cyrill del Callar, look even far cuter than this already cute administration.

And everybody in business just recently thought that this guy was on the way out!

* * *

Enter a Napocor-friendly group called Nasecore (National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms) that, as its name indicates, is only actually masquerading as a consumer advocate group.

As if by coincidence, Nasecore and Napocor had the same line on the forex gain issue. Both did not want to return the P155 billion to us, the public. *Aw*, that hurts!

Last year, in fact, Nasecore even went to the Supreme Court to stop Napocor from returning to us our own money.

The Supreme Court, not surprisingly, went along with Nasecore.

The head of Nasecore is a certain Pete Ilagan. Pete who? Well, just Pete Ilagan.

Anyway, Nasecore is attacking the Department of Energy and the Energy Regulatory Commission on the forex gain issue.

What can really get you is, when the issue is bad for Napocor, this thing called Nasecore is completely silent.

But it did make a whimper when we experienced "brownouts" a few months ago, simply because our beloved Napocor bungled the fuel supply for power-generating plants.

Nasecore was more quiet than Good Friday when Napocor had to rush the purchase of expensive coal to address the "emergency" that Napocor created.

Are you suspicious yet?

* * *

Left-leaning groups, declaring that they are only taking up the cudgels for farmers, are on a media campaign trail against the Department of Agriculture.

They are against the DA plan for Chinese investments in large farms here.

As everybody knows, except perhaps the action stars in the Senate, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap moved heaven and earth to patch up those Chinese investors with local private groups for large-scale industrial farming.

In paid ads in the dailies, appearing three times already, the groups said such a plan is bad for the farmers. They also want the government to distribute the land to farmers instead. *Hmm.*

There, that should send the Chinese packing home! Go away! We don't need your investments! Something like that.

I only know that this country does not really get much investment in agriculture.

According to official figures, only some 3.5 percent of available loans go to agriculture.

Yet roughly 80 percent of the population are still dependent on agriculture for their livelihood—okay, for their very lives!

Under the plan, some three million hectares of idle land will get those investments.

Fu Hua Company will also invest $3.83 billion in one million hectares for hybrid corn, hybrid rice and hybrid sorghum. I mean, where can we get that kind of money?

Those ads, if I'm not mistaken, cost a fortune.

But don't ask me why the groups did not just give the money to poor farmers.

* * *

And still on paid ads: I noticed that some people who claimed to have come from the "insurance sector," who nevertheless did not reveal their real identities, put out an ad (not in this newspaper) favorable to Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo.

Just how much those people in insurance paid for the ad, the newspaper refused to tell me.

But look, Mamonluk, they came out with an ad that was good for the very same person who, as regulator of their industry, is supposed to be exercising power over them in all aspects of their business.

I mean, come on—it's not just a question of ethical business practice. It is, to me, an out-and-out conflict of interest.

This same Escobillo, the beneficiary of the expensive paid ad, became insurance commissioner after a bank accused her of doing Enron-type fraud.

Escobillo was president of Anchor Savings Bank, owned by the religious organization Knights of Columbus.

She resigned even before this cute administration was fooled into appointing her insurance commissioner.

As far as I know, Escobillo has yet to refute the findings of the bank's board members, who are all outstanding members of the organization, that she booked fake loans, faked the sale of foreclosed assets, deposited P3.9 million from the sale of another foreclosed asset to her account, reimbursed huge bills (a few from cosmetic clinics), converted foreclosed assets into fictitious loans and booked fictitious income.

That's the person for whom the "insurance sector" put out the expensive paid ad? Really?

Mr. Bearbull

From page B3

them would have seen it.

Somebody complemented me on driving today. There was a notice on the windscreen, which said PARKING FINE.

* * *

A year ago, on May 2, I told readers and subscribers to sell everything even though there was not a cloud in the sky because the risk factor was 100 (maximum). Over the next six weeks, the PHISIX fell 563 points—an incredible call. Last week, with no problems on the horizon, I wrote that a correction was imminent because my indicator was 99. Since then, Wall Street has been plummeting on the news that Bear Stearns had written off 20 percent of the value of two hedge funds worth $4 billion. This raises concern that the banks will be saddled with losses. Merrill Lynch threatened to sell $850 million worth of bonds, which would have been disastrous, but they recanted and said they would hold for the time being.

It has been the worst week for the S&P 500 index since last March and financial giants Citigroup, Bank of America and J.P. Morgan led the market down. It appears that Bear Stearns overvalued their CDOs (collateralized debt obligations), which are backed by bonds, loans and derivatives. There is strong speculation that many other institutional investors will have to write down the value of securities containing sub-prime mortgages spreads. Although Bear Stearns stepped in to assume the remaining $3.2 billion in loans, there is a strong feeling that many other hedge funds are also overvaluing their assets. There are a large number of hedge funds and they control not billions but trillions of dollar assets. The possibility of a domino effect cannot be ruled out and the results could be catastrophic to the financial system if investors liquidate their positions.

It will take not days but weeks or possibly months before we know whether a financial crisis is going to develop. The demise of Bear Stearns-managed leveraged mortgage funds could lead to a broader fallout from subprime mortgage credit deterioration. This could lead to higher rates for new mortgage borrowers and thereby exacerbate the housing slump. Merrill Lynch, J.P. Morgan and Lehman Brothers have put some of their collateral up for sale. Home starts fell for the first time in four months in May, suggesting that the worst housing recession in 16 years will linger on.

At this point, it might be helpful to define what a hedge fund is and what it does. First of all, it is not subject to federal or state security loans and they do not register with the SEC so they are not legally responsible to anyone. Many of them are registered in tax havens, which do not ask any questions. There are more than 9,000 hedge funds in the US alone and they are estimated to manage trillions of dollars in assets.

To join a hedge fund as an investor, you must have a net worth of $1 million, an income in excess of $200,000 a year or $300,000 if the wife is included. A qualified purchaser is an individual or family business, which owns $5 million or more in investments or has discretion over $25 million or more in investments (that lets me out).

They can invest anywhere in the world in real estate, stocks, mortgage bonds, currencies, fixed-interest stocks, derivatives, indeed anything that can be traded. They can go long or short and can leverage their funds. The managers usually get a performance fee of 20 percent of the profits, which gives them a strong incentive to perform well. They also get at least one percent of the assets, minimum $10,000, regardless of performance. Those that are in the US are subject to capital gains tax net of fees.

If you lose more than your initial $1 million investment, you do not have to pay the performance fee (or nonperformance fee) but you still have to pay the management fee of one percent to 2 percent. Since I advise investors well and make lots of money for them every year without any management fee, I am clearly in the wrong business. In fact, investors want to pay me for producing excellent results but I feel that it is wrong to accept a fee simply for doing my job. At my age, health is more important than wealth.

The PHISIX has held up very well so far but last Friday, foreign brokers sold P2.2 billion, mostly through a huge cross sale of MBT. As expected, President Arroyo sacked BUÑAG and offered him a post as envoy to OUTER MONGOLIA, which he refused. He blamed his failure on TEVES, who plans to raise an additional $100 million in bonds from OCWs and by the sale of assets worth P50 billion. MER and PNB will be easy but SMC might be difficult if chair COJUANGCO disputes ownership, and PNOC assets may not fetch the prices that the government is asking. It is by no means a fait accompli.

A huge volume was generated by the IPO of AGI, and there were more crosses than in Arlington Cemetery. On Wednesday, the government released its budget, which showed revenue well behind spending and a shortfall of 18.5 percent. The BIR was ranked second most inefficient out of 98 countries. On Friday, there was some important news on memory chips but I have forgotten it.

Please note that I have changed my e-mail address to nathan.ronald@gmail.com. Spam may be sent to the old address.

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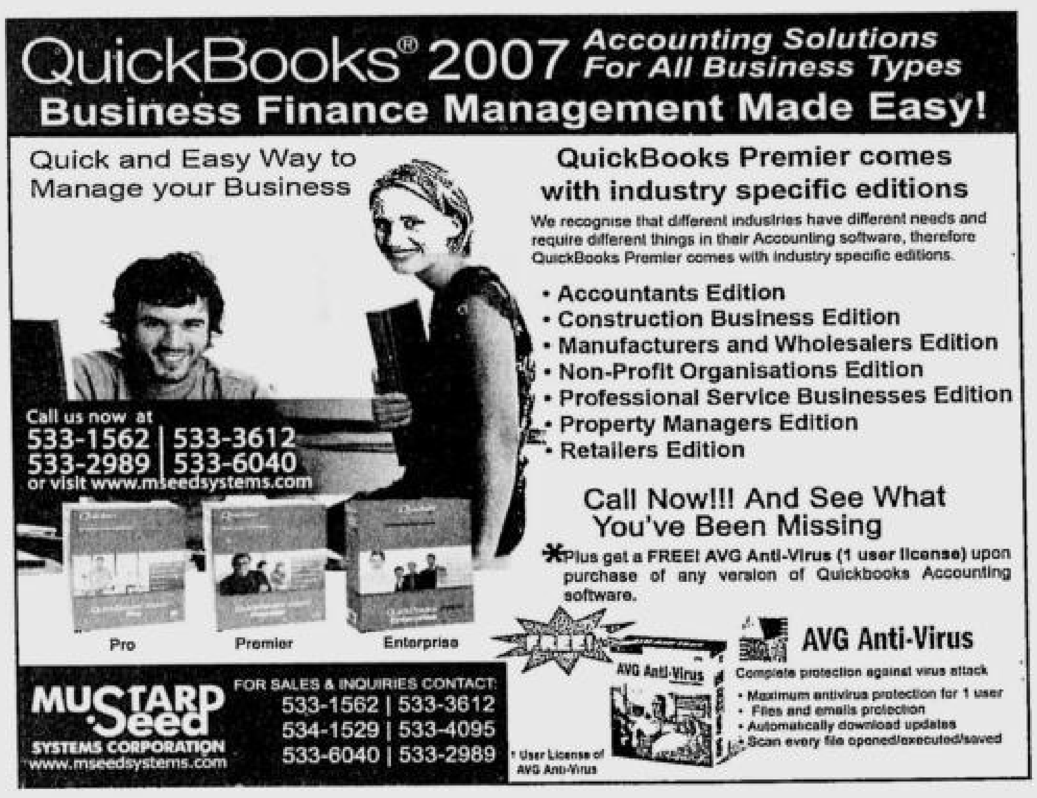

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- Integrated RAID-0, 1, 3, 5, 10
- 512MB Controller Memory with battery-backed cache
- 2x5M LC-LC Fibre Channel Cable 39M5697
- 2x4Gbps SW SFP Transceiver 39R6475
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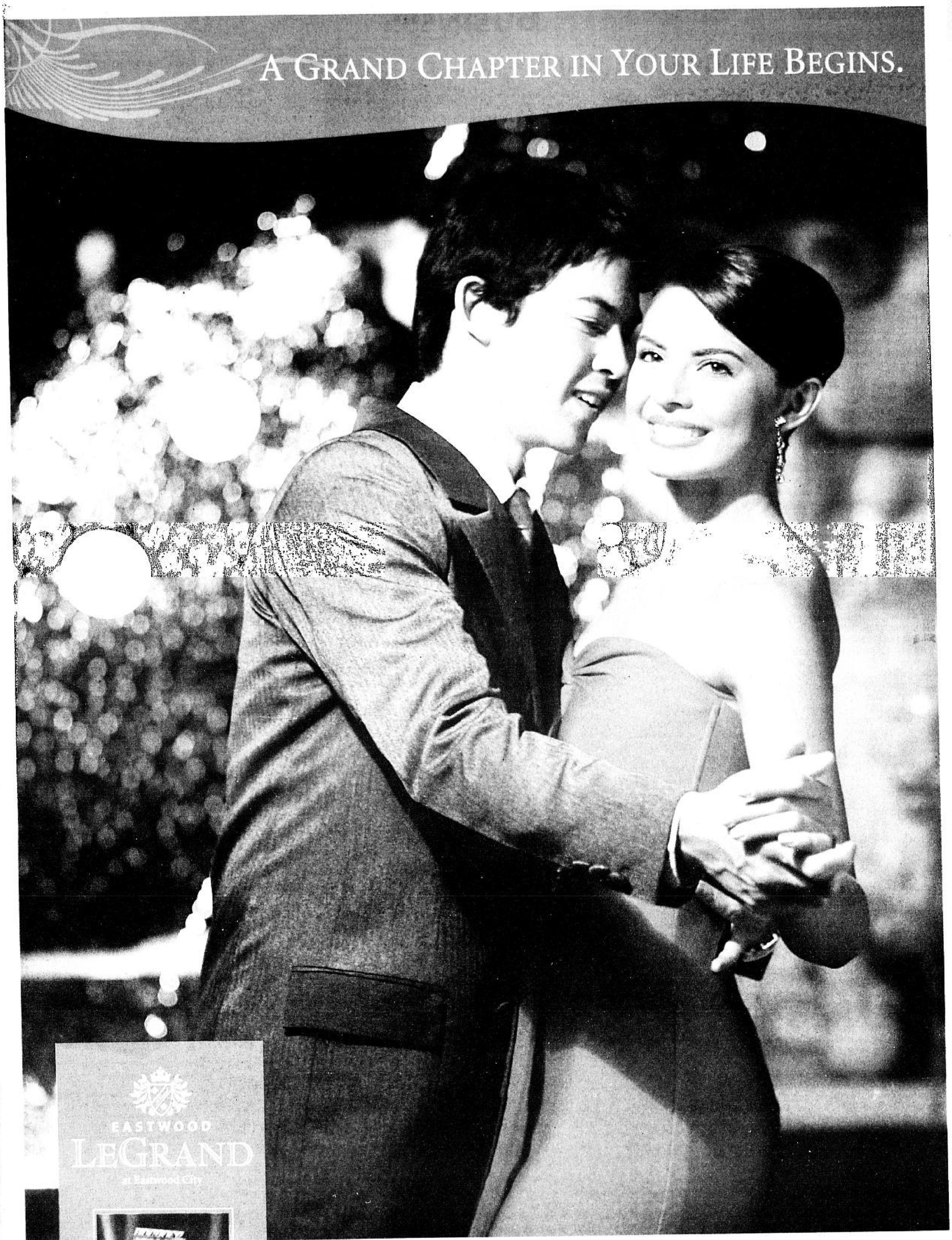
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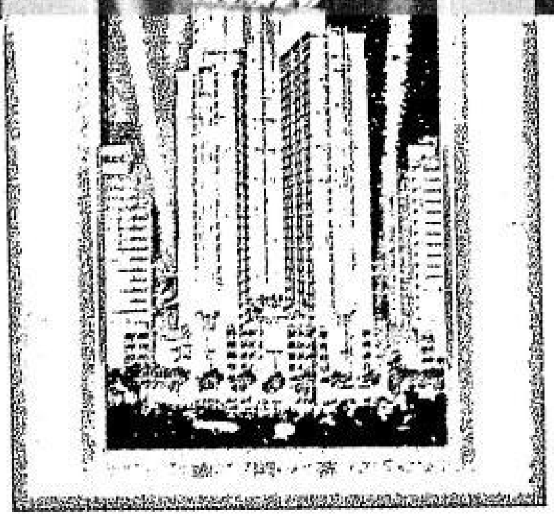

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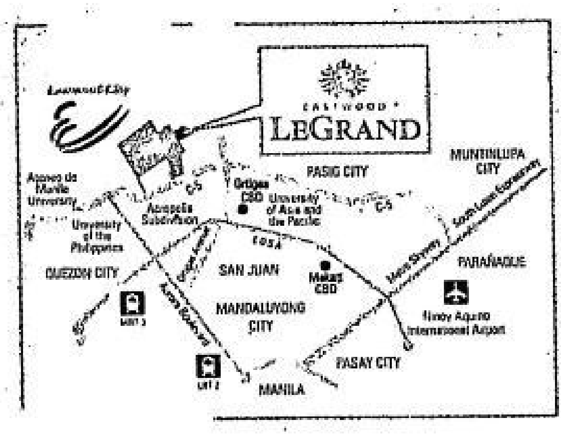
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for the ultra life /C3

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INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

Wellness tips for people in a hurry

SO, YOU ARE PART of the frenetic world where just about everyone is in a hurry. Most people who take part in this rat race often complain that they simply do not have enough time to a) eat the right food b) exercise c) relax and d) spend time with the family.

If you agree with at least two items in the mini-check list and you consider your health important, then it is time to make some adjustments.

Try as much as possible to incorporate any of these suggestions and your life will dramatically improve due to greater energy (giving you the fuel needed to be efficient), improved sense of well-being and a more positive outlook in life.

Let us begin.

Simple steps

- If you can set the alarm to get up early for a morning meeting, you can add an extra 20 minutes to allow for some exercise.
- No time for the gym? Then run around your house or place of residence for 20 minutes. This is all it takes to maintain your heart's health.
- If it is weight loss you are after, walk at least 30 minutes a day.
- Do you start the day rushing to work? That is okay. If you have no time to sit down and have breakfast at home, do it while on the run. Make time to eat at least one banana and a glass of soy or non-fat milk. Unless you are a growing child, you do not need the fat in milk.
- Start the day right with a prayer and an affirmation. This keeps you centered—no matter how stressful your day may be.
- Have a minute or two? Close your eyes even for two minutes. Shut out the noise of the world. Enter your own silence any time you find a spare moment to relax.
- Instead of always taking coffee breaks, try to have tea in between. Note: If you are already hypertensive, coffee will aggravate your health condition, unless you drink the beverage in moderation.
- Cut down on the sugar. People who have the blues may resort to eating sweets more frequently. Easy. Sugar, while it gives you a temporary high, is not the best of comfort foods.

This is because consuming more sweets will cause you to eat more sugar. Thus, it is a habit that will lead to diabetes and obesity one day.

- If you are always hungry or a compulsive eater, chances are there is always food in your office drawer. There are housewives who like to keep a fridge in their bedrooms. While it may be practical, it is too tempting. Keep it as far away from your reach as possible.
- If you have snacks in your desk drawer, make them healthy. Throw away the junk food. And replace them with healthy cravings like soy-based snacks and beverages, fruits and veggies, nuts and whole-grain/fiber power-bars.
- If you are a drinker, try to limit your intake to red wine. But this does not give you the license to finish one bottle.
- Break your intense scheduling by doing something as simple as this—walk away from a heavy meeting just for a breather. The distraction, whether it is simply to go to the vending machine or water dispenser, ought to clear your mind.
- Clear up your skin as well. Make time to have a beauty bath. In a tub of very warm water, throw in three cups of fresh milk. This should soften your skin within five minutes of soaking.
- Drink water. Have a jug beside you at work and at all times.

Love and light!

> Start the day with a prayer and affirmation. This keeps you centered

Beautiful skin for the bride

EVEN BEFORE SHE CAN think of her wedding gown, every bride should make sure she will be wearing beautiful skin on her special day.

The stress of attending to all the little details of a wedding is sure to leave its mark. The bride should make sure she gets a complete beauty and wellness makeover.

Clarity Aesthetic and Laser Center offers a complete array of beauty and wellness services from trained and licensed specialists.

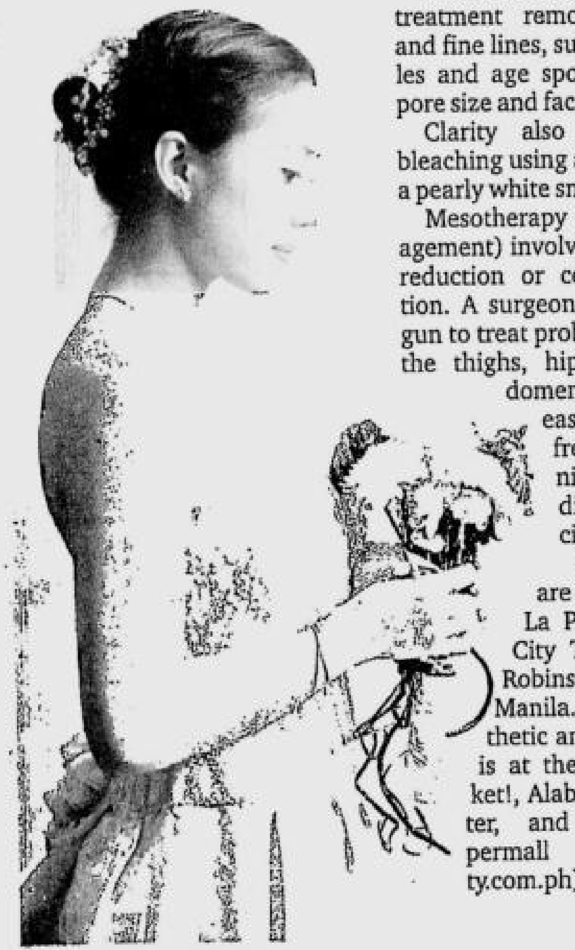
Specialized treatments include the Intense Diamond Peel (Microdermabrasion) to remove gently dead skin cells and scars. The procedure also enhances collagen fibers to rejuvenate the skin.

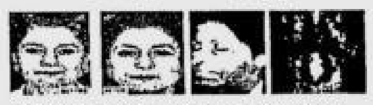
Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) treatment removes wrinkles and fine lines, sun spots, freckles and age spots. It reduces pore size and facial veins.

Clarity also offers teeth bleaching using a LED laser for a pearly white smile.

Mesotherapy (weight management) involves spot weight reduction or cellulite reduction. A surgeon uses a mesogun to treat problem areas like the thighs, hips or the abdomen. Treated areas remain fat-free if accompanied with proper diet and exercise.

Clarity clinics are at the Shangri-La Plaza mall, SM City The Block and Robinsons Place, Manila. Clarity Aesthetic and Laser Center is at the Market! Market!, Alabang Town Center, and Festival Supermall (www.clarity.com.ph).





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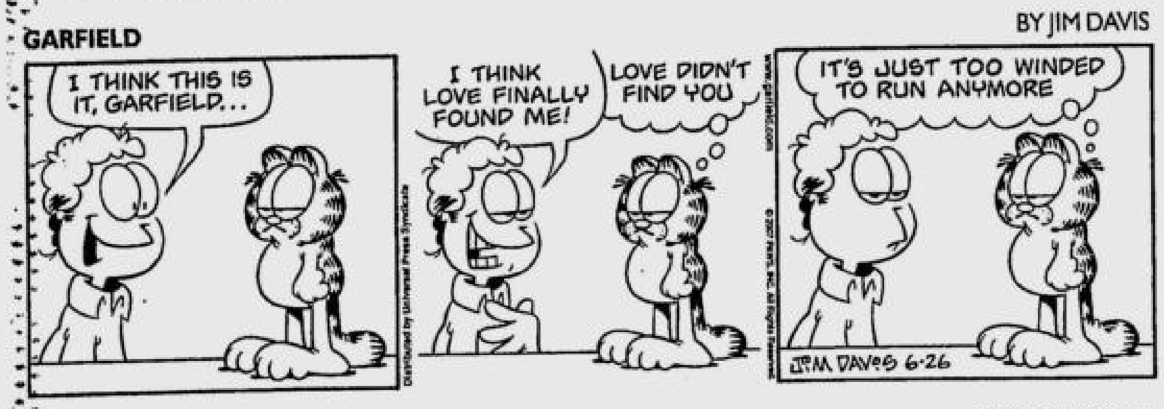
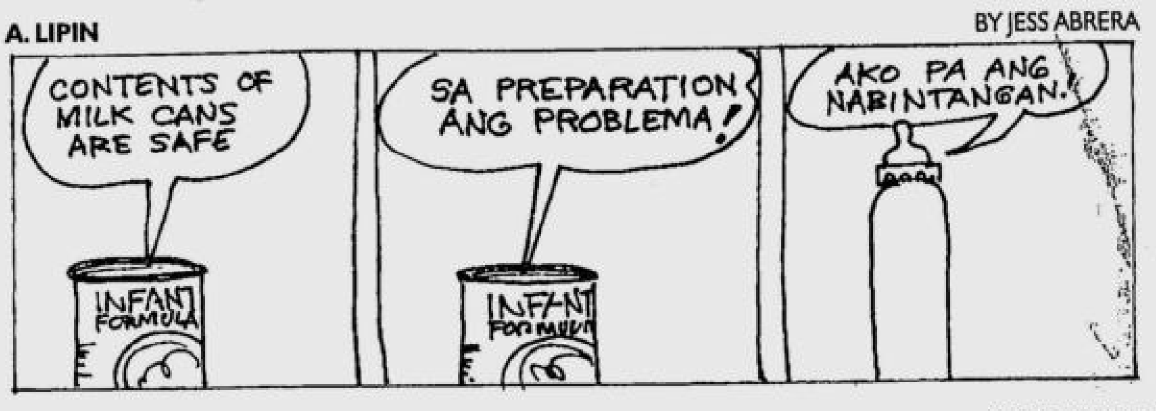
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I THINK THIS IS IT, GARFIELD...
I THINK LOVE FINALLY FOUND ME!
LOVE DIDN'T FIND YOU
IT'S JUST TOO WINDED TO RUN ANYMORE
JIM DAVIS 6-26

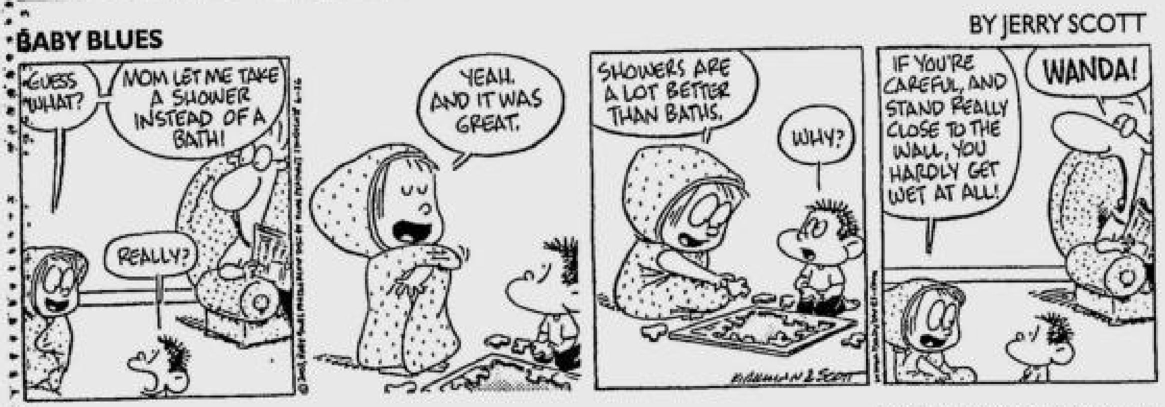
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


CONTENTS OF MILK CANS ARE SAFE
INFANT FORMULA
SA PREPARATION ANG PROBLEMA!
INFANT FORMULA
AKO PA ANG NABINTANGAN!

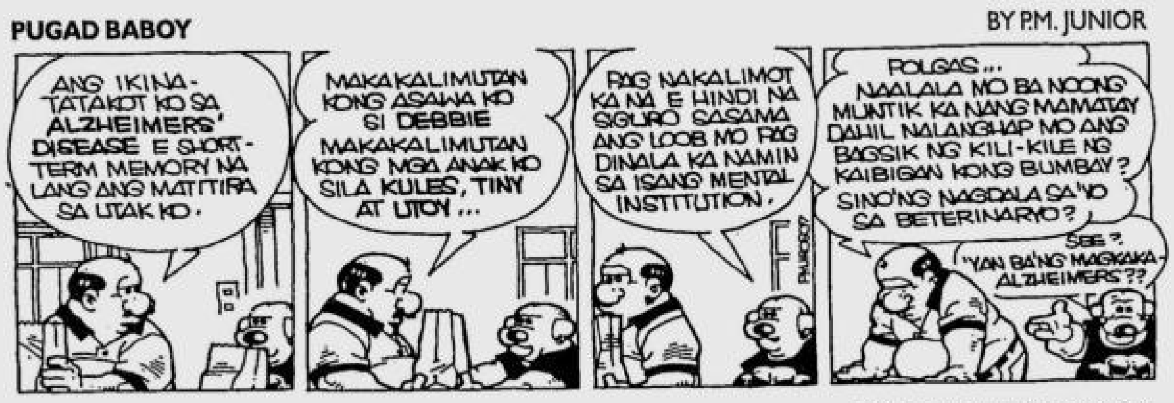
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


GUESS WHAT?
MOM LET ME TAKE A SHOWER INSTEAD OF A BATH!
REALLY?
YEAH. AND IT WAS GREAT.
SHOWERS ARE A LOT BETTER THAN BATHS.
WHY?
IF YOU'RE CAREFUL, AND STAND REALLY CLOSE TO THE WALL, YOU HARDLY GET WET AT ALL!
WANDA!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

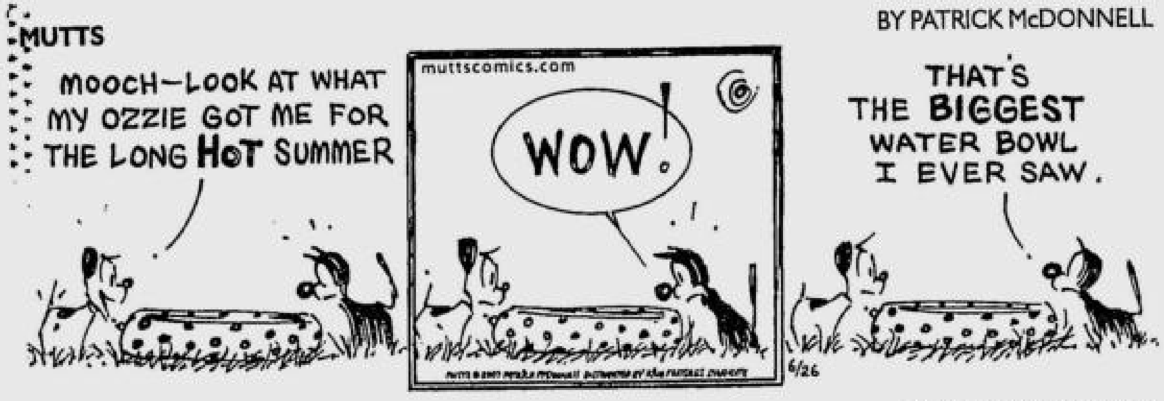
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG IKINATATAKOT KO SA ALZHEIMERS' DISEASE E SHORT-TERM MEMORY NA LANG ANG MATITIRA SA UTAK KO.
MAKAKALIMUTAN KONG ASAWA KO SI DEBBIE MAKAKALIMUTAN KONG MGA ANAK KO SILA KULES, TINY AT UTOY...
PAG NAKALIMOT KA NA E HINDI NA SIGURO SASAMA ANG LOOB MO PAG DINALA KA NAMIN SA ISANG MENTAL INSTITUTION.
POLGAS... NAALALA MO BA NOONG MUNTIK KA NANG MAMATAY DAHIL NALANGHAP MO ANG BAGSIK NG KILI-KILE NG KAIBIGAN KONG BUMBAY? SINO'NG NAGDALA SA'YO SA BETERINARYO?
SEE? 'YAN BA'NG MAGKAKA-ALZHEIMERS??
PUGROOT

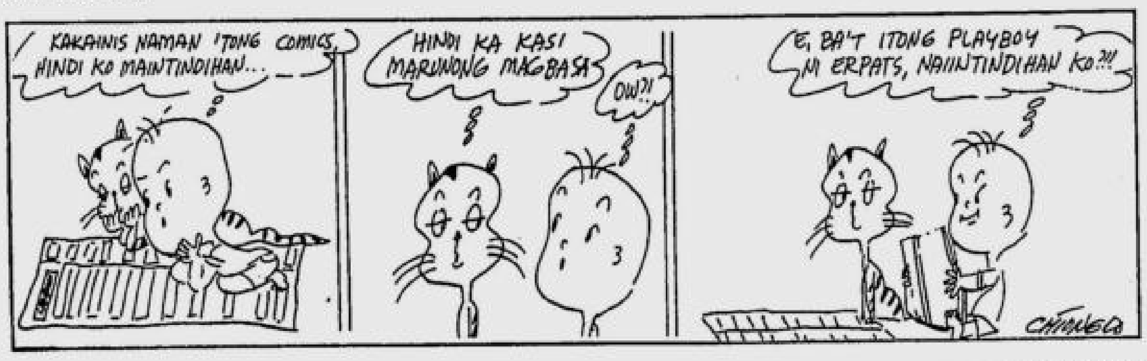
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH—LOOK AT WHAT MY OZZIE GOT ME FOR THE LONG HOT SUMMER
muttscomics.com
WOW!
THAT'S THE BIGGEST WATER BOWL I EVER SAW.
6/26

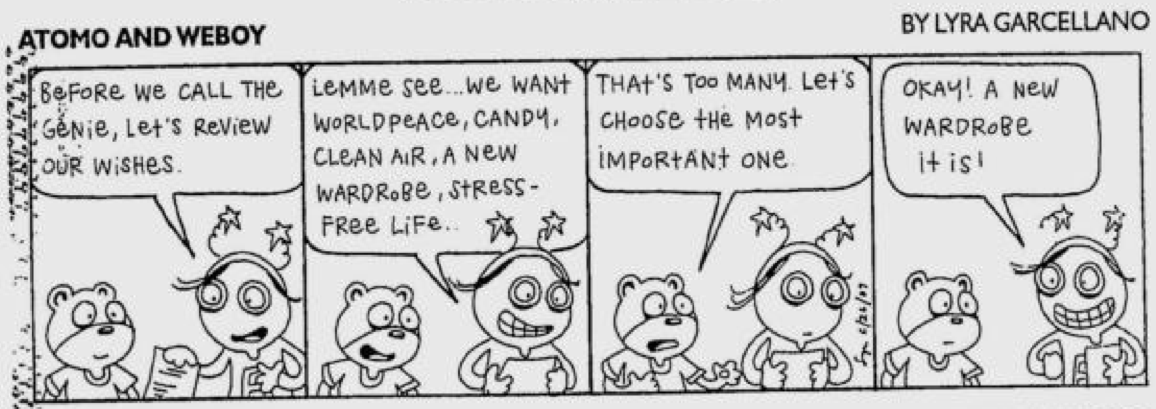
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KAKAINIS NAMAN 'TONG COMICS, HINDI KO MAINTINDIHAN...
HINDI KA KASI MARUNONG MAGBASA
OW?!
E, BA'T ITONG PLAYBOY NI ERPATS, NAIINTINDIHAN KO?!!
CHIONGLO

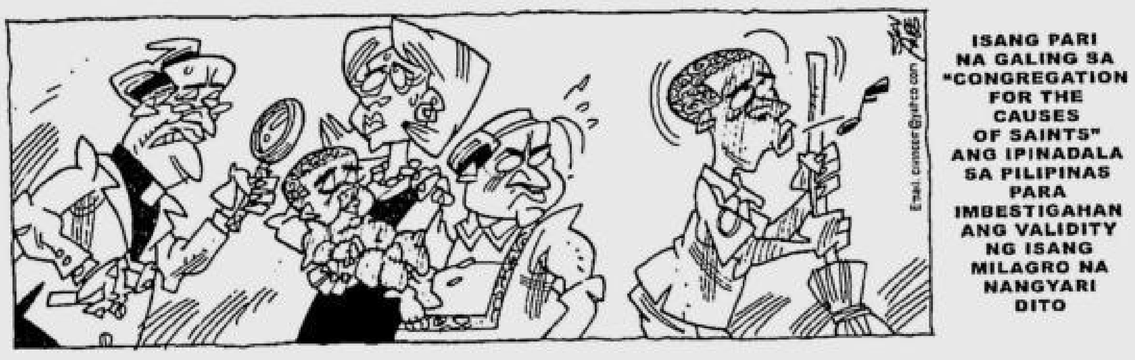
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


BEFORE WE CALL THE GENIE, LET'S REVIEW OUR WISHES.
LEMME SEE...WE WANT WORLDPEACE, CANDY, CLEAN AIR, A NEW WARDROBE, STRESS-FREE LIFE..
THAT'S TOO MANY. LET'S CHOOSE THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE
OKAY! A NEW WARDROBE IT IS!

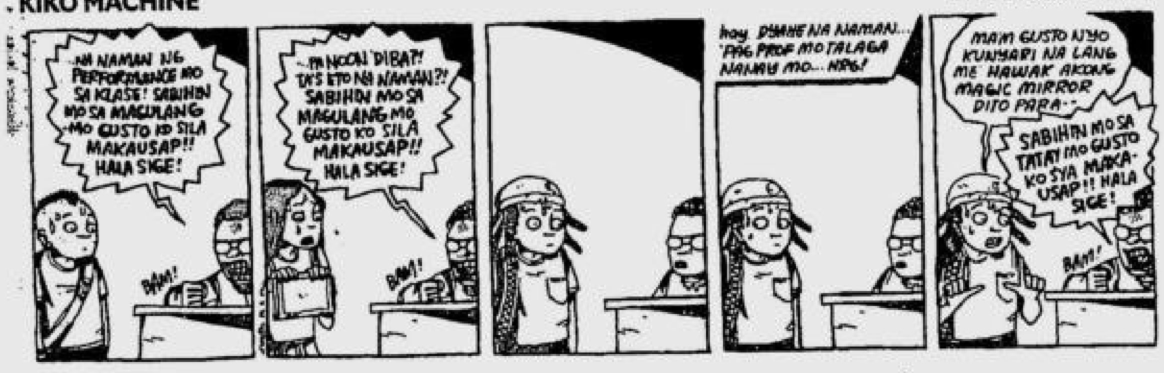
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ISANG PARI NA GALING SA "CONGREGATION FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS" ANG IPINADALA SA PILIPINAS PARA IMBESTIGAHAN ANG VALIDITY NG ISANG MILAGRO NA NANGYARI DITO

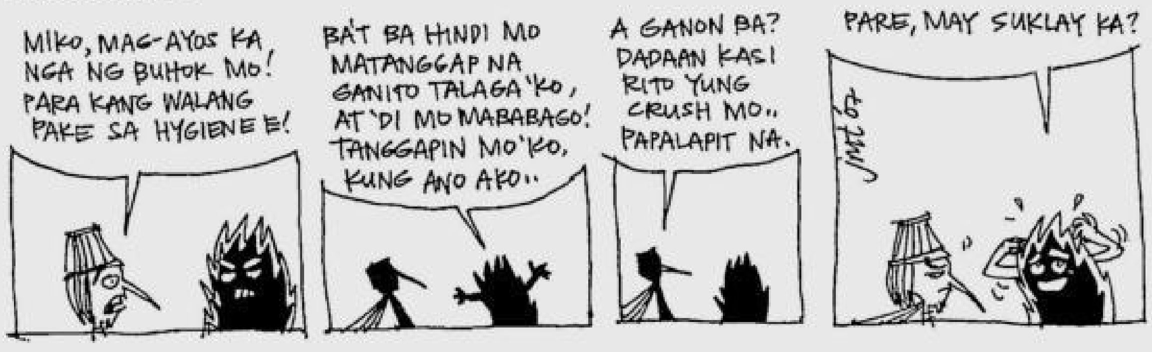
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...NA NAMAN NG PERFORMANCE MO SA KLASE! SABIHIN MO SA MAGULANG MO GUSTO KO SILA MAKAUSAP!! HALA SIGE!
BAM!
...PANOON DIBA?! TAS ETO NA NAMAN?! SABIHIN MO SA MAGULANG MO GUSTO KO SILA MAKAUSAP!! HALA SIGE!
BAM!
hay. DYAHE NA NAMAN... 'PAG PROF MO TALAGA NAMAN MO... HP6!
MAM GUSTO NYO KUNYARI NA LANG ME HAWAK AKONG MAGIC MIRROR DITO PARA...
SABIHIN MO SA TATAY MO GUSTO KO SYA MAKAUSAP!! HALA SIGE!
BAM!

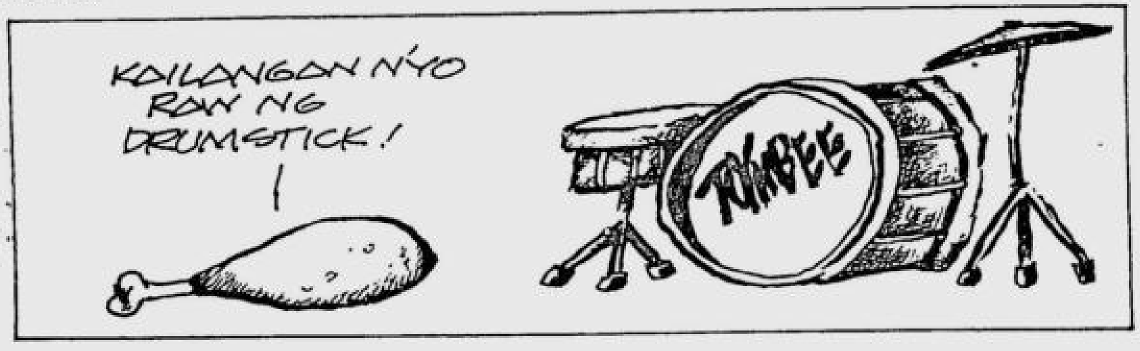
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MIKO, MAG-AYOS KA NGA NG BUHOK MO! PARA KANG WALANG PAKE SA HYGIENE E!
BAT BA HINDI MO MATANGGAP NA GANITO TALAGA 'KO, AT 'DI MO MABABAGO! TANGGAPIN MO 'KO, KUNG ANO AKO..
A GANON BA? DADAAN KASI RITO YUNG CRUSH MO.. PAPALAPIT NA.
PARE, MAY SUKLAY KA?

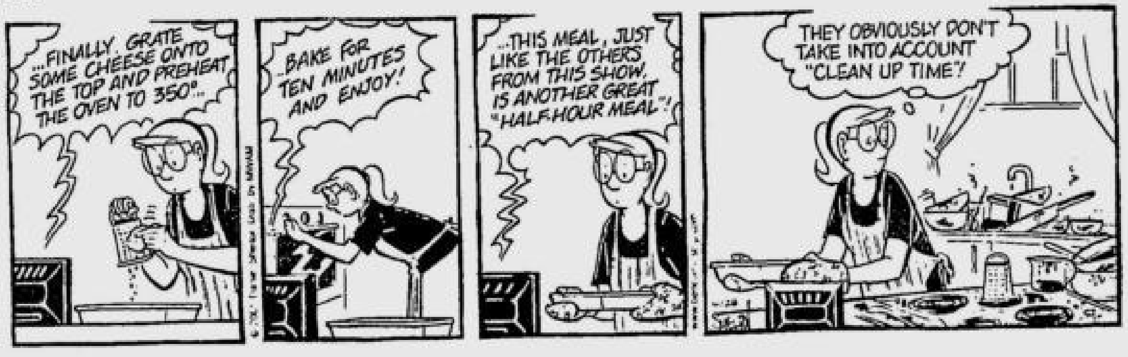
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

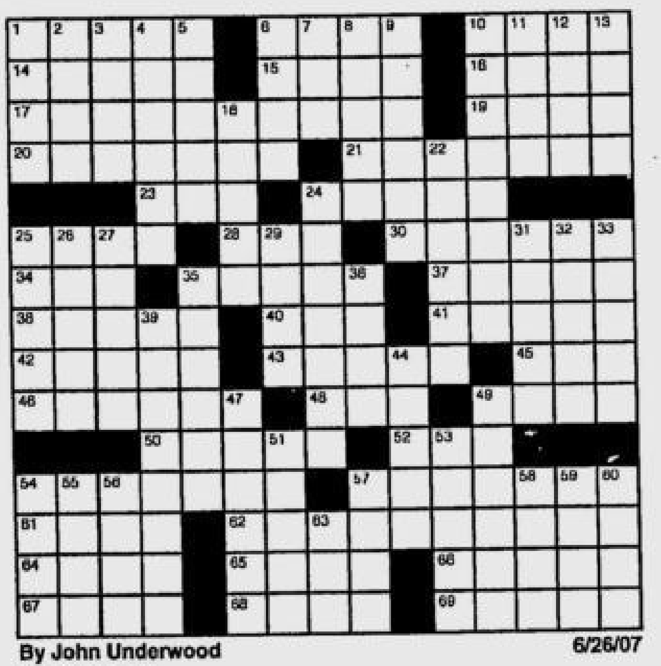

KAILANGAN N'YO RAW NG DRUMSTICK!
TAMBEE

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


...FINALLY, GRATE SOME CHEESE ONTO THE TOP AND PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 350°...
...BAKE FOR TEN MINUTES AND ENJOY!
...THIS MEAL, JUST LIKE THE OTHERS FROM THIS SHOW, IS ANOTHER GREAT "HALF-HOUR MEAL"!
THEY OBVIOUSLY DON'T TAKE INTO ACCOUNT "CLEAN UP TIME"

DAILY CROSSWORD



By John Underwood
New York, NY

6/26/07

ACROSS
1 Miata maker
6 Sharif or Epps
10 "The Thief of Baghdad" co-star
14 Sidestep
15 Iditarod terminus
16 Fox or turkey dance
17 Reaction to a fright, maybe
19 Drops on the windshield
20 Shoe parts
21 Worthy of affection
23 Spun snare
24 Down there
25 Read data
28 Poetic tribute
30 Part of A.D.
34 Monopolize
35 Gushing jet
37 Actress Claire
38 Sun-dried brick
40 Tide rival
41 Shaq's surname
42 Actress Oberon
43 Nowheresville
45 School grp.
46 Olympic cheer
48 Jellied delicacy
49 Kind of bomb
50 Merits
52 ROTC relative
54 Mining track
57 Altar boy
61 Quick note
62 "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the __"
64 Sailor's saint
65 Rich deposit
66 Old photo tint
67 Midday
68 Extremities
69 Type of salts

DOWN
1 Bethlehem triad
2 Mary Kay rival
3 Faunae displays
4 Wash one's hands of
5 Simpson or Astaire
6 Burden of proof
7 Friendly matriarch
8 More than enough
9 Bought, then auctioned off
10 Scarecrow of Oz
11 Part of U.A.E.
12 Seethe
13 The __ Reader
18 Jazz style
22 Religion of zombies
24 Puzzle's theme
25 Sea World orca
26 Cryptography subject
27 Greek market
29 Affair of honor
31 All thumbs
32 Groovy!
33 Muslim faith
35 Teeter-totter
36 Domesticated
39 Month of Sundays?
44 Screen
47 Fit to be farmed
49 Sacked out
51 Hose material
53 Thicket
54 Fed. agents
55 Move, in Realtor-speak
56 Cache in an arsenal
57 High cards
58 Sounds in pounds
59 Half a sextet
60 Oater actor Jack
63 Tack on

Monday's Puzzle Solved

C	A	R	A	T	■	D	E	P	P	■	A	D	A	M
A	R	O	S	E	■	E	L	I	E	■	R	O	D	E
M	I	C	K	E	Y	F	I	N	N	■	A	N	A	T
■	■	■	S	T	E	A	D	■	D	A	M	A	G	E
S	U	M	■	H	A	T	E	F	U	L	■	L	E	D
T	R	I	T	E	R	■	■	E	L	A	N	D	■	■
A	G	N	E	S	■	E	S	A	U	■	A	T	R	A
R	E	N	T	■	S	T	O	R	M	■	F	R	O	G
T	R	I	O	■	T	H	U	S	■	E	T	U	D	E
■	■	E	N	T	R	E	■	■	S	T	A	M	E	N
P	O	P	■	W	A	R	P	A	T	H	■	P	O	T
I	C	E	C	A	P	■	O	L	L	I	E	■	■	■
N	E	A	L	■	P	L	U	T	O	C	R	A	C	Y
T	A	R	A	■	E	E	R	O	■	A	G	G	I	E
O	N	L	Y	■	R	O	S	S	■	L	O	A	D	S

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6/26/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're energetic in a physical way. (You're not lazy!) You work hard at your job, and you work equally hard to maintain your home and family. (Home is important.) You enjoy sports, and you're clever at making money. You're courageous about whatever you're doing. Sometimes you even test yourself. The year ahead will involve change, perhaps as significant as around 1998.

Birthdate of: Babe Zaharias, female athlete; Gretchen Wilson, singer; Derek Jeter, baseball player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Confusion with friends about money and shared property is likely today. Furthermore, you might feel slighted by others because you think they aren't giving you a fair deal. Stand up for yourself.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be extra patient with partners today. Something having to do with bosses or parents could lead to frustration and disappointment, which, in turn, makes you take things out on those who are closest to you. Not good.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Don't get your belly in a rash today worrying about something that can't be changed. Just let it go. Only worry about things where you can make a difference.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your high hopes for a party or social plans might be diminished somewhat because of a lack of funds. Something might be delayed. (Just regroup for another time.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Before you get carried away with disappointment about a partner or close friend, ask yourself if your expectations were realistic. Perhaps you were expecting too much?

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Don't worry if something shakes your confidence today. It's probably due to some kind of confusion or crossed communication. You're as good as you were last month.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might feel let down by friends or groups, especially pertaining to money. Just remember: Unexpressed expectations almost always lead to disappointment. Were you clear with everybody about what you wanted?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your feelings might be hurt by a boss, parent or teacher today. But there's a good likelihood that this is just based on a misunderstanding. Keep an open mind. (But not so open that everything falls out.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Confusion about religious or political matters could trigger arguments or disappointments. Don't let this happen. It's over by tomorrow.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Double-check your finances today to make sure you have enough money to do what you want to do. Something confusing is afoot.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You value your friends. Because of this, you sometimes expect too much of them. But they have to put their pants on one leg at a time just like everyone else.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with co-workers and customers. Confused communication might lead to misunderstandings today. No one is at fault.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

			7		3			
				4				
5	2	3				8	4	7
3			6		8			5
	7			5			6	
1			4		7			9
4	5	8				7	1	2
				8				
			2		1			

Difficulty Level ★★

6/26

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

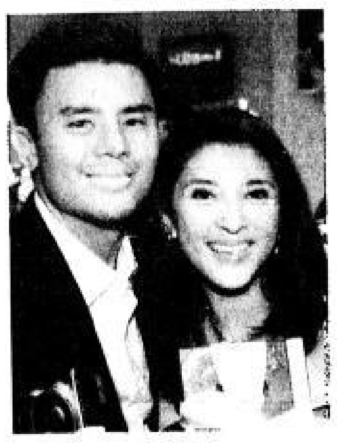
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	7	8	4	5	3	6	1	2
1	6	3	2	8	9	7	5	4
5	2	4	7	6	1	3	8	9
7	1	6	9	4	5	8	2	3
3	4	9	8	2	6	1	7	5
2	8	5	1	3	7	4	9	6
4	3	2	5	7	8	9	6	1
6	9	7	3	1	2	5	4	8
8	5	1	6	9	4	2	3	7

Difficulty Level ★

ADORABLE PAIR: Christine Jacob and husband Paco Sandejas



DREAM COUPLE: Crickette Yu T. and husband Donnie Tantoco

POWER COUPLE: Stores Specialists Inc.'s Anton Huang and wife Nina Herrera

CECILE Chang Y. of Silk resto and husband Louie Ysmael of Nuvo

HOTSHOTS: Samsung's VP Charles Choi, Mobile Group head Fe Varilla and general manager Jerry Lacson

TOP jeweler Doody Tuason and son Sev

BEAUTIFUL couple Marilen and Santi Elizalde

CARLA Sibal with Samsung's Pen Roque

CHOY Cojuangco and wife Marissa Echaus C.

F&H'S Ronald Pineda, Tweety de Leon-Gonzalez and Randy Ortiz

ARCHIE Rodriguez, McC Cuan, Bea Valdes and Inno Sotto

Celebrating passion for the ultra life

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

COSMO *MANILLE'S* FASHIONABLE people flocked to the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila for the launch of the super-anticipated Ultra 2 Edition cell phones of Samsung, one of the world's leading mobile phone brands, dahlings.

Stylish, sleek, slim and sophisticated aptly describe the new line of Samsung Ultra 2 phones, *palanggas*. Our town's who's who, some 100 chosen hot new guards and achievers, who attended the fab event possessed qualities that matched those of the products.

The ballroom was chic in black and white for the totally exquisite evening. It began with champagne cocktails and wine at the foyer, which was draped in black, a preview of the elegant evening ahead.

Led by the inimitable, handsome and cyber smart **Edu Manzano**, the black curtains were dramatically drawn to display the fabulous dining area with its two long tables adorned with breathtaking arrangements of white roses, tulips and orchids brilliantly executed by southern gent **Robert Blancaflor**.

Getting the elegant evening rolling was Samsung's vice president for mobile phones **Charles Choi** who briefly outlined the great new Samsung mobile phones to be unveiled. He thanked the chi-chi invitees, including Samsung's dealers, partners and telecommunications operators.

Dinner was absolutely exquisite, a five-course meal, exclusively prepared by The Peninsula top-of-the-line chefs. Champagne and wines flowed, *palanggas*.

During dinner, the hard-to-beat Akafellas serenaded us with popular tunes, drawing applause with each number.

Host Edu M. gamely interacted with some of the guests like my favorite traffic-stopper **Tessa Prieto Valdes**, television host **Kim Atienza**, supermodel **Tweety de Leon-Gonzalez**, and the Prince of Alta Moda **Inno Sotto**, no less, dahlings.

Then, for the highlight of the evening, black curtains around the ballroom were raised and folded as gorgeous models wearing **JC Buendia** and **Anne Bichelmeier** designs in white paraded around Samsung's newest black, sleek and chic line of premium phones—The Ultra Edition 2, The Samsung Ultra Edition II, plus four other eye-catching Samsung phones.

Then, Samsung's mega VP **Charles C.** welcomed all of us who were "living the Ultra life." He ended his short thank-you speech with "I would like to thank all of you for being here tonight. And to show our gratitude, we are giving each one of you our latest Samsung Ultra Edition 2."

The announcement was greeted with wild loud applause from the surprised and happy invitees. Wow! Then the hot sounds of the Brass Monkeys had us rocking on the dance floor.

Big names in the business world were there, like JG Summit's **Lance Gokongwei** and his sister **Liza Gokongwei-Cheng**; Stores Specialists Inc.'s **Anton Huang**, with wife **Nina**; Shopwise's dream team **Donnie Tantoco** and his wife **Crickette Yu T.**; Bench mega visionary **Ben Chan**; mega entrepreneur **Choy Cojuangco** with wife, southern gal **Marissa Echaus C.**; Peninsula Manila's popular general manager **David Batchelor**; Belo Medical Group's iconic **Vicki Belo**; Globe Asiatique's divine maven **Divine Lee**; publishing bigwigs **Ernie Lopez** with wife **Jeena Llamas**; plus so many others like them from the elite, *palanggas*.

VICKI Belo and Hayden Kho

PENINSULA'S David Batchelor, Silk Cocoon's Katrina Goulbourn F. and husband Chris Feist

TRISHA Chua of Yves Saint Laurent

MYRZA Sison and Iza Calzado

All this was superbly organized by PR wonder women Susan Joven and daugnter **Ginggay dela Merced** of Visions & Expressions, *natch*.

Top beauty products

If there is one event that those in the world of beauty look forward to with excitement, it is the prestigious global Prix d'Excellence dela Beaute given by the women's magazine Marie Claire. The award has become a benchmark in the world beauty industry, *palanggas*.

Recently, Le Soufflé at the Rockwell Club rocked as the Philippine edition of Marie Claire magazine recognized these beauty products as the creamiest of the crop, dahlings: Rouge Allure lipstick by Chanel, Perfect Touch by Yves Saint Laurent, Casting Crème Gloss hair color by L'Oreal Paris and UV+Sun Care by Clarins. A special award was given to L'Oreal Pro-Xylane.

The Philippine board of judges was headed by Marie Claire beauty and fitness editor **Marie Calica**, Preview beauty editor **Agoo Bengzon**, Cosmopolitan beauty editor **Mariel Chua**, beauty columnist for The Star's Y-Style section **Jackie Cohen-Antonio**, and our very own Philippine Daily Inquirer Beauty editor, **Ria Francisco-Prieto**.

Iza Calzado, last month's Marie Claire cover girl, was *tres* visibly in love with music talent manager **Jerry Garcia**, *palanggas*. It was her second time around as cover gal of the magazine. The first was the magazine's maiden issue in November 2005, *palanggas*.

Celebrating life

The Robinson's Galleria Supermarket did a first again, *palanggas*, when it turned its wine section into a colorful, bustling fiesta to launch Boone's Fiesta Sparkling Wine, the newest member of the Boone's *famille*, that offers a fabulous line of fruity wines from sunny California.

With temperatures still rising, Boone's Fiesta is the perfect refreshing fruit-flavored sparkling wine to cool you with its yummy bubbly and semi-sweet taste. This great party-maker has funky designs, and eye-catching colors for each of its awesome peach and strawberry drinks with a so convenient resealable twist-and-pop cap.

Invitees at the launch were amazed at the unique performance of the Regaro Capoiera by the Brazilian Martial Arts Group. Then it was time to indulge in the delectable creations from innovative chef **Gene Gonzales**, no less, of Café Ysabel. Boone's fiesta drinks demonstrated their versatility as beverages that will complement a variety of cuisine, *palanggas*.

Hey, it's the only sparkling wine that is so easy on the pocket, priced below P200, *palanggas*. Boone's Fiesta Sparkling Wine is available in all Robinson's Supermarkets.

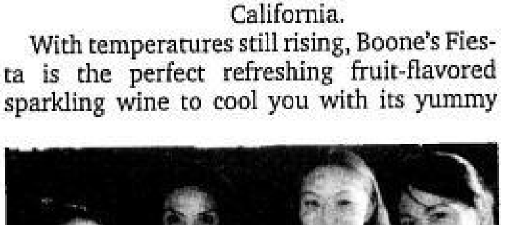
Yes, life is a fiesta, dahlings.

MODELS show off the latest stylish Samsung Ultra II edition phones.

JG SUMMIT'S Liza Gokongwei-Cheng

CEBU Pacific's brilliant Lance Gokongwei

JERRY Francia, Robina Gokongwei-Pe, Winston Co and Jody Gadia enjoy the refreshing Boone's Fiesta sparkling wine.



ORANGE Aberina, Tetta Ortiz-Matera, Marina Benipayo and Patty Betita

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Your Doctor Knows Best

Nelson S. Abelardo, MD, FPCP, FPCC

Question:

I have read that cardiovascular diseases are the number one killers among Filipinos. What are these diseases and what would put me at risk of having these?

Doctor says...

Yes, it is true that cardiovascular diseases or CVD are the number one cause of death not only in the Philippines but worldwide. From the term itself, cardiovascular diseases are the diseases of the heart (cardio) and the blood vessels, which include your arteries and veins (vascular).

Cardiovascular diseases involve a wide spectrum of conditions. These include angina (chest pain) and myocardial infarction (heart attack) that result when the blood vessels supplying oxygen to the heart are affected. These may also manifest as stroke or brain attack and peripheral vascular disease, associated with obstruction of blood flow in the arteries supplying your extremities.

The occurrence of these diseases is an interplay between genetics and the environment, which means one's habits and lifestyles. The risk factors for the development of cardiovascular diseases may be divided into two – non-modifiable and modifiable. Non-modifiable factors are those that you cannot change such as being male, increasing age and having a family history of cardiovascular disease. On the other hand, modifiable factors are those that you can change. These include smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, obesity, lack of exercise and high blood cholesterol.

Evolutionary trends in the management of cardiovascular diseases have changed from disease specific and symptomatic relief-focused to a more comprehensive and holistic approach. Just to reiterate, the risk of developing a particular disease is an interplay of the mentioned risk factors. No risk factor is an island. Most of these usually occur in clusters. Thus early identification and evaluation by your doctor is necessary for these risk factors to be addressed properly.

Take hypertension as an example. Its occurrence and increasing incidence can be attributed to different risk factors, which if not addressed correctly, taking into consideration the presence of other concomitant conditions, could lead to fatal consequences.

Modern medicine has a lot to offer and patients need not wait, wither and die. New modalities and treatment options are being introduced, scrutinized, evaluated and utilized to promote a better management plan. Effective, safe and tolerable medicines in combination with equally important lifestyle changes are at hand to combat these diseases.

You and your doctor need to be vigilant, cautious, multidirectional, holistic and not disease-specific. Its time to see the person behind the disease as a whole, taking into account the different factors that puts him/her at risk for developing cardiovascular diseases. There are sufficient time and resources to modify these factors, and many new treatment modalities improve greatly the healthcare delivery systems.

For proper guidance, evaluation and management, please consult your doctor.

Dr. Abelardo is a cardiologist. He is the Chief of the Section of Cardiovascular Medicine, Philippine General Hospital (PGH). He holds clinics at Manila Doctors Hospital and Asian Hospital and Medical Center. Dr. Abelardo is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines, College of Medicine.

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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INNER AWARENESS

Jaime Licauco

Poland has great interest in psychic topics

I DID NOT KNOW WHAT AWAITed me when I was invited to conduct a series of inner mind development seminars in Warsaw and Poznan by the Institute of Valeology headed by Irena Galinska-Musiol.

Since Poland is 95-percent Catholic, an even higher percentage than the Philippines', I expected a greater degree of resistance to my ideas and teachings.

I was wrong! Over 200 people attended my Introductory Lecture at the Ethnological Museum in Warsaw.

I was featured in "The Unknown World," the largest esoteric magazine in Poland, interviewed on television and on radio. Another well-known publication in Poznan, whose name roughly translates into "Fortune Teller Magazine" but actually features metaphysical and spiritual topics, also did a long interview with me.

It was a dizzying and hectic 12-day trip. My wife Yoly, who accompanied me, complained that she hardly had time to do some shopping and sightseeing. But I told her this first trip would not be the last but was only the beginning. This turned out to be correct.

The institute asked me to sign a three-year contract to conduct a series of seminars in Poland. Another agreement I signed was a contract for the Institute to translate and publish three of my books into Polish. The books are "Soulmates, Karma & Reincarnation," "The Magicians of God" and "Exploring the Powers of Your Inner Mind."

Faith healers

Since the '90s, Filipino faith healers and psychic surgeons from Baguio City have done healing in Poland. The first to go there was the late Jose Segundo, who was killed when he was mayor of a municipality in Abra.

It was healer Hari Lukingan who introduced me to the Institute of Valeology, which invites experts and speakers from various parts of the world to give lectures and seminars on metaphysical, spiritual and new consciousness subjects.

I met during this trip Baguio healers Jaime Pusot and Antonio Pelingan, who were working with the institute. They are not allowed to do psychic surgery, only magnetic healing, physical therapy and massage.

The seminars I conducted in Warsaw were "Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation," "Basic ESP and Intuition Development" and "The Power of Intuition in Management." The last topic was discussed in Poznan with prominent business leaders and executives.

Two young men with the institute, Christopher Horbaczewski and Chris Witalewski, acted as interpreters for Irena and her partner Andrew who did not speak English.

During the seminars they hired a professional interpreter named Sarah to do the simultaneous translation of my lecture. Though I was apprehensive at first, the arrangement proved pretty successful.

I told my hosts that, considering that Poland was a heavily Catholic country, I was surprised at the open-mindedness of participants and the warm reception given my teachings which, in my own country, were regarded with suspicion and even opposed by certain conservative sectors of the Catholic population.

Hungry for knowledge

Irena told me that in Poland the people were hungry for real knowledge about metaphysics, spirituality and higher consciousness. That was why the Institute had been inviting experts in various fields from all over the world as they did not have such expertise yet.

When I was there, the institute had programmed seminars on Hypnosis, Arcturian Sacred Geometry, Tantra Yoga of Sex, Ayurveda and other topics loosely labeled "New Age" in the Philippines.

Journalist Anna Forecka of Fortune Teller Magazine, a writer for 11 years, interviewed me for almost two hours about varied topics saying she would write a long feature article about me in her popular magazine.

A participant in my ESP seminar in Warsaw turned out to be an independent producer of television documentary programs. He interviewed me about the use of intuition in management, which seemed to be a very new subject for them.

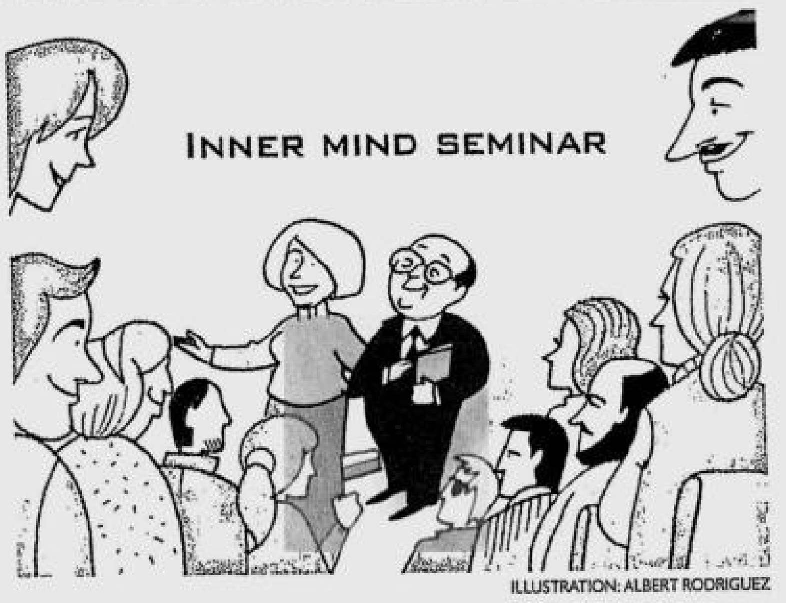


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

A consultant who worked part-time with the Institute of Valeology, asked if I had a seminar on creative thinking that I could conduct in Poland. I used to teach that subject for various companies in the Philippines, including in the Master in Entrepreneurship program at the Asian Institute of Management, where I was a part-time faculty member.

Since Poland has joined the European Union, there is great pressure on the country to catch up with the rest of Western Europe. This is why they need courses that will improve the creative and innovative thinking skills of the people.

Before I left Warsaw, I was told that they got money from the EU to fund a seminar on Creative Thinking and Problem Solving. Next March I will be back in Poland to teach this subject and conduct my other inner mind development seminars.

Note: For inquiries on books, paranormal services and seminars on Inner Mind Development, ESP and Intuition Development, and Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation conducted by this writer, call 8107245, 8926806; fax 8159890 or e-mail innerawareness_2005 @yahoo.com.

See Double! Enjoy Double! The new Ube Strawberry Chiffon Slice!
Goldilocks. BAKESHOP • FOODSHOP
Ang Sarap Magmahal Ng Pinoy.

Diapers for growing child

BABIES NOWADAYS SEEM TO GROW EXTRAORDInarily fast.That's why Drypers Wee Wee Dry baby diapers developed the new XXL size to fit a growing baby's needs.

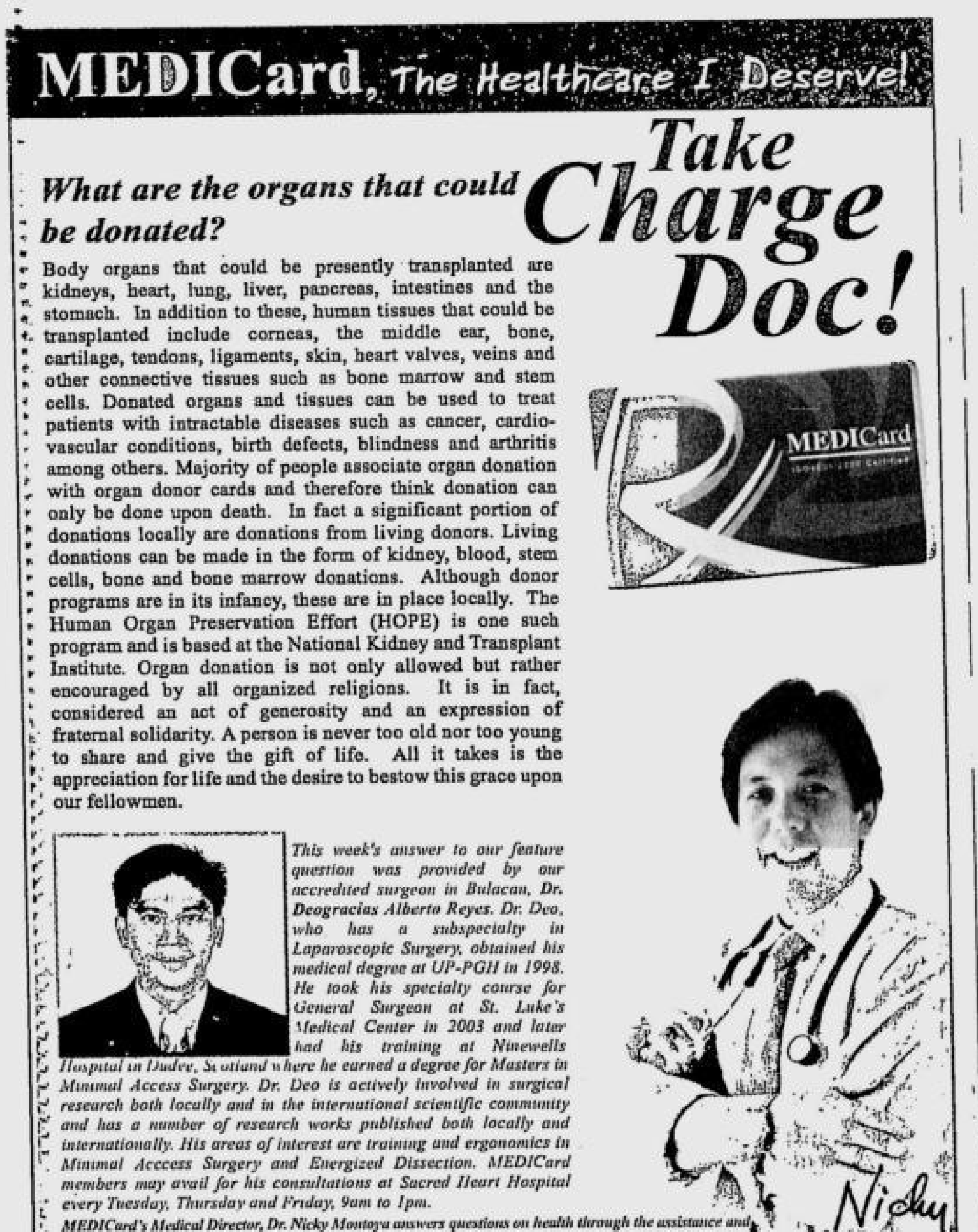
The new Drypers was recently launched, in collaboration with Moms Today, at the Mega Trade Hall 3 of SM Megamall. Especially made for babies weighing 15 kg and up, the new Dypers XXL diaper is 18 percent bigger than the XL size.

Its yellow elastic waistband is 18-percent wider than the XL size and has a 15-percent bigger leg circumference.

The durable diaper core absorbs up to 19 percent more liquid than the XL size and is less prone to leakage, sagging or breaking when wet. It has durable, breathable and stretchable features providing comfort by reducing skin irritations and keeping baby's skin dry and cool all the time.

The new Drypers XXL Diapers is now available in major supermarkets nationwide. Choose from any of the five sizes: small (green), medium (blue), large (orange), XL (violet) and XXL (yellow).

Drypers
Wee Wee DRY
NEW FEATURES
XXL3



MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

Take Charge Doc!

What are the organs that could be donated?

Body organs that could be presently transplanted are kidneys, heart, lung, liver, pancreas, intestines and the stomach. In addition to these, human tissues that could be transplanted include corneas, the middle ear, bone, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, skin, heart valves, veins and other connective tissues such as bone marrow and stem cells. Donated organs and tissues can be used to treat patients with intractable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular conditions, birth defects, blindness and arthritis among others. Majority of people associate organ donation with organ donor cards and therefore think donation can only be done upon death. In fact a significant portion of donations locally are donations from living donors. Living donations can be made in the form of kidney, blood, stem cells, bone and bone marrow donations. Although donor programs are in its infancy, these are in place locally. The Human Organ Preservation Effort (HOPE) is one such program and is based at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute. Organ donation is not only allowed but rather encouraged by all organized religions. It is in fact, considered an act of generosity and an expression of fraternal solidarity. A person is never too old nor too young to share and give the gift of life. All it takes is the appreciation for life and the desire to bestow this grace upon our fellowmen.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our accredited surgeon in Bulacan, Dr. Deogracias Alberto Reyes. Dr. Deo, who has a subspecialty in Laparoscopic Surgery, obtained his medical degree at UP-PGH in 1998. He took his specialty course for General Surgeon at St. Luke's Medical Center in 2003 and later had his training at Ninewells Hospital in Dudee, Scotland where he earned a degree for Masters in Minimal Access Surgery. Dr. Deo is actively involved in surgical research both locally and in the international scientific community and has a number of research works published both locally and internationally. His areas of interest are training and ergonomics in Minimal Acccess Surgery and Energized Dissection. MEDICard members may avail for his consultations at Sacred Heart Hospital every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9am to 1pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

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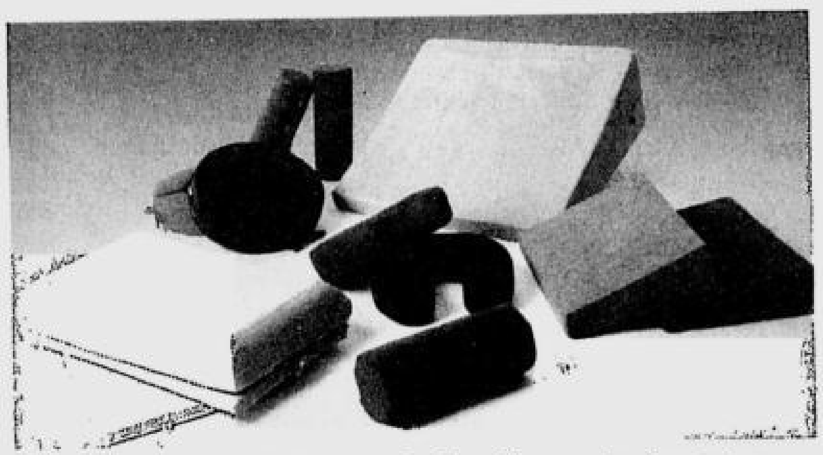
A good rest's mate

TODAY'S LIFESTYLE IS CAUSING stress and tension to a lot of people.

A good night's rest is important for them to recover from the aggravation they face in the daytime.

For people who have difficulty sleeping, products are available to help them enjoy a deep and restful sleep.

Now Mates, a new product line that resulted from space technology and consisting of memory foam-based pillows and accessories, has been introduced in the local market.



ADJUSTABLE universal pillow, med incline pillow, wedge, donut, trav-mate and neck/lumbar roll

The memory foam was originally developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to protect astronauts from the pressure of G-force during space travel.

Later, the memory foam was used in medicine, particularly to prevent bedsores in patients who spent a lot of time lying down.

The cost of memory foam has dropped significantly that it is now used in mattresses, pillows, mattress toppers/pads and other comfort accessories. It is also used in wheelchair seat cushions, hospital pillows and padding for persons suffering long-term pain or postural problems.

A memory foam cervical pillow is used to ease chronic neck pain.

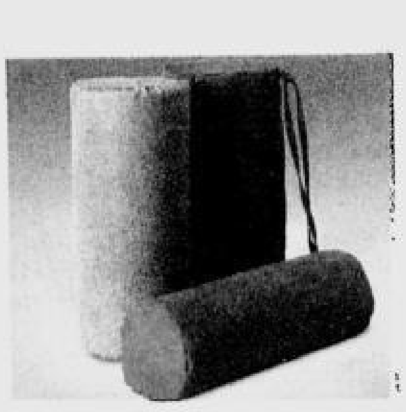
The memory foam reacts to body heat and adapts to the user's contour. This distributes pressure, thus reducing localized pressure points for more comfort and better rest.

Mates currently has six products —wedge, donut, trav-mate, neck/lumbar roll, adjustable universal pillow and med incline pillow. Wedge may be used on wheelchairs, conventional and office chairs and cars; or as back support.

Designed as personal massage pillow to support the face/head, donut may be used for short naps. It minimizes facial marks and localized reddening.

Trav-mate provides neck support during trips, reducing neck strain when napping while seated. Neck/lumbar roll provides support and reduces strain on neck and lumbar region.

Mates' adjustable universal pillow is made with memory foam and conventional foam extender for both comfort and support. Its height may be adjusted to suit personal preferences. The med incline pillow is suitable as bed topper, with or without additional pillow, for people with medical problems. It lets pregnant women have a restful sleep. It may also be used as leg props or back support.



ROLL pillows reduce strain on neck and lumbar region during long trips.

Mates has a booth (No. 134) at the Fil-Negosyo Expo 2007 which runs until July 1 at the SM Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall. Call Sourcerite, Int'l at 3617702, 3618955 or 0922-8981568. E-mail srite@pldtdsl.net.

ENTERTAINMENT

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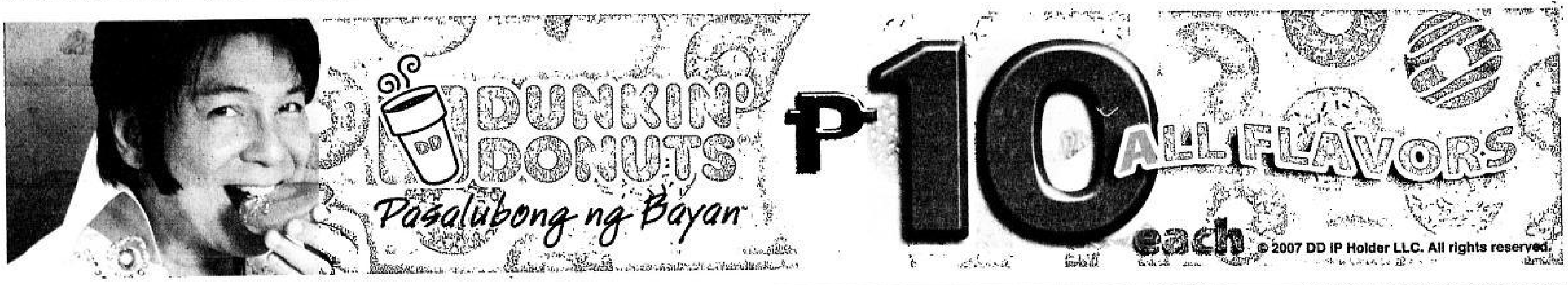

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'Paraiso' makes P200M in the US

By Marinel R. Cruz

A TRILOGY ON THE LIVES of people touched by the NGO Gawad Kalinga, "Paraiso" has raised P200 million for the anti-poverty movement from its screenings in the United States alone.

Funds collected from exhibitions in other parts of the globe are still being tallied, according to Dylan Wilkes of Gawad Kalinga.

"Paraiso" has so far been shown in more than 20 cities in the US and in Canada, and in over 10 countries in Europe, including Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, France, Spain and Germany. It has also been screened in Australia and New Zealand. Next stop will be Japan and Singapore, added Wilkes.

"We don't conduct fund-raising in most of the premieres. But many of the Filipinos who came to watch wanted to get involved with GK," said Wilkes. "It's either they give money or express interest in starting their own GK village in the provinces where they came from."

Powerful stories

Gawad Kalinga was launched in 2001 to care for Filipino survivors of natural disasters. Now, GK actively works in poverty-stricken areas to improve quality of life by providing decent homes and resources for the poor to become self-sufficient.

"The movie appeals especially to Filipinos abroad. Many live in very difficult situations themselves, but they haven't stopped loving their country. They dream of coming home to a better Philippines one day," said Wilkes, who is married to the daughter of GK founder Tony Meloto.

"Paraiso" features three powerful stories of heroism. "Umiyak Man ang Langit (Even If Heaven Cries)" tells the touching experience of Jocelyn Llorente, who lost her loved ones in the mudslides of Southern Leyte. Maricel Soriano plays the lead role, directed by the award-winning Jun Lana and produced by Tony Tuviera.

"Ang Kapatid Kong si Elvis (My Brother Elvis)" is a story of a boy who ate pebbles to fight off hunger. Child actor Paulken Bustillo portrays the role of Elvis. Michael V and Carmi Martin play his parents. Joel Ruiz directed the episode produced by Butch Jimenez.

"Marie," starring Cesar Montano and Lexie Schultz, is based on how one's tragic loss can be turned into a living legacy and a new beginning. Marie Rose Abad perished in the 9/11 World Trade Center tragedy and her husband fulfills her dreams by building and dedicating a Gawad Kalinga village in her honor. Ricky Davao worked at the helm of the episode, produced by Tony Gloria.

The producers, as well as some of the artists, waived their talent fees for GK, said Bobby Barreiro, executive producer. The funds collected, including movie gate receipts and donations, will all go to GK.

Michael V said he did not consider waiving his talent fee a form of sacrifice. "I feel fulfilled to be able to work on a project like this," he added.

Barreiro said that, aside from giving up their fees, Maricel volunteered to fly to Los Angeles to promote the film there and Carmi went to the movie's premiere in Las Vegas and Boston.

Maricel said: "With this project, I feel as if my talent was put to good use. I've been in this business for 37 years but I still couldn't explain *bakit ganado ako kahit wala namang bayad*."

"Paraiso" held its Philippine premiere on June 12 at the SM Mall of Asia. It official open in local theaters on July 4.

SUNSHINE Cruz and Cesar Montano

PDI PHOTO

OGIE Alcasid and Regine Velasquez

Sunshine: Let Buboy clear his name

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

SUNSHINE CRUZ WOULD RATHER keep mum about rumors that her hubby **Cesar Montano** was recently spotted in a girly bar (Air Force 1). "It's up to Buboy to clear his name," she says.

I texted Buboy, who's in the US, for his side, but he hasn't replied.

I've seen the couple in unguarded moments. I remember when Buboy and I were judges in Bohol's Ms Sandugo. Shine didn't watch, so when we got back to their rest house, she kept asking Buboy if the contestants were prettier than she was.

They jousted about it non-stop. When Shine got annoyed, Buboy made *lambing* , reassuring her that she's the only one for him.

I see nothing wrong with Buboy going on a boys' night-out for good clean fun. Also, occasional bouts of jealousy are healthy for a marriage; it prevents couples from being lulled into complacency.

Sweet song

Nothing comes close to **Regine Velasquez**'s love songs than the sweetness of her public declaration that she'd give up her career for **Ogie Alcasid**. Ogie says, "I would gladly take a back seat for her, too. But I will never ask her to quit show biz for me. We are both supportive of each other although we make sure not to lose our individuality."

Is Ogie going to compose a new song for his ladylove? "What I feel for her is beyond songs. One song I usually sing to her is 'Love Me Tender.'"

Even **Elvis Presley** must be thrilled to hear that.

Failed romance

Unlike Regine and Ogie, **Nyoy Volante** and **Nina** are not singing a happy tune these days. The acoustic duo have parted ways. Nyoy sighs, "We'd rather keep the details of our breakup private. We remain friends."

Nyoy and Nina's romance deserves a repeat performance.

Back to school

Marvin Agustin is going back to school. "I'll be taking up Management Studies at Somerset International Resource Center starting July. My twins are also studying *na. Sabay kaming mag-aaral* (laughs)!"

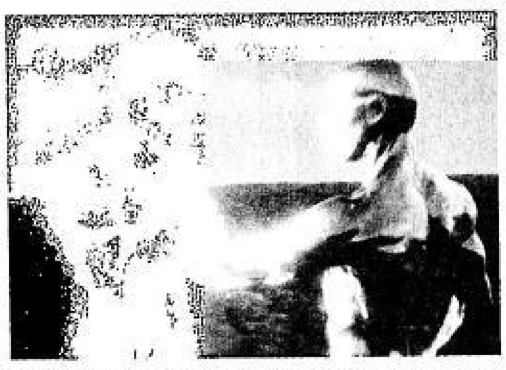
The entrepreneur in Marvin will put his studies to good use. He and his biz partners just opened a third resto, Smairu, at the Ayala Trinoma. Marvs is also excited about his new soap "Ang Mga Mata ni Angelita."

I tease him. "What about *mga mata ni* **Angel (Locsin)**?" Marvin just winks as if to say those are for his eyes only.

Revealing shots

I came across some artsy revealing shots of **Miriam Quiambao** for a Hong Kong fotog. I asked if that's an indication that she's ready to pose for men's magazines. She exclaims, "*Ay! Huwag muna!* I don't want people to think that just because I've separated from my husband, I've gone wild *na*!" Looks like her daring side is reserved for her late-night show "Palaban."

SUNSHINE/ D2



THE FANTASTIC Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer

Shiny, superficial but somewhat fun

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

THE FIRST "FANTASTIC FOUR" MOVIE wasn't spectacular at all. The fan-fave Marvel comic book's translation was lacking in fun and lasting combat sequences. It wasn't "Elektra" or "Punisher"-bad, but it wasn't exactly something to gush over, even if it captured the core essences of its characters.

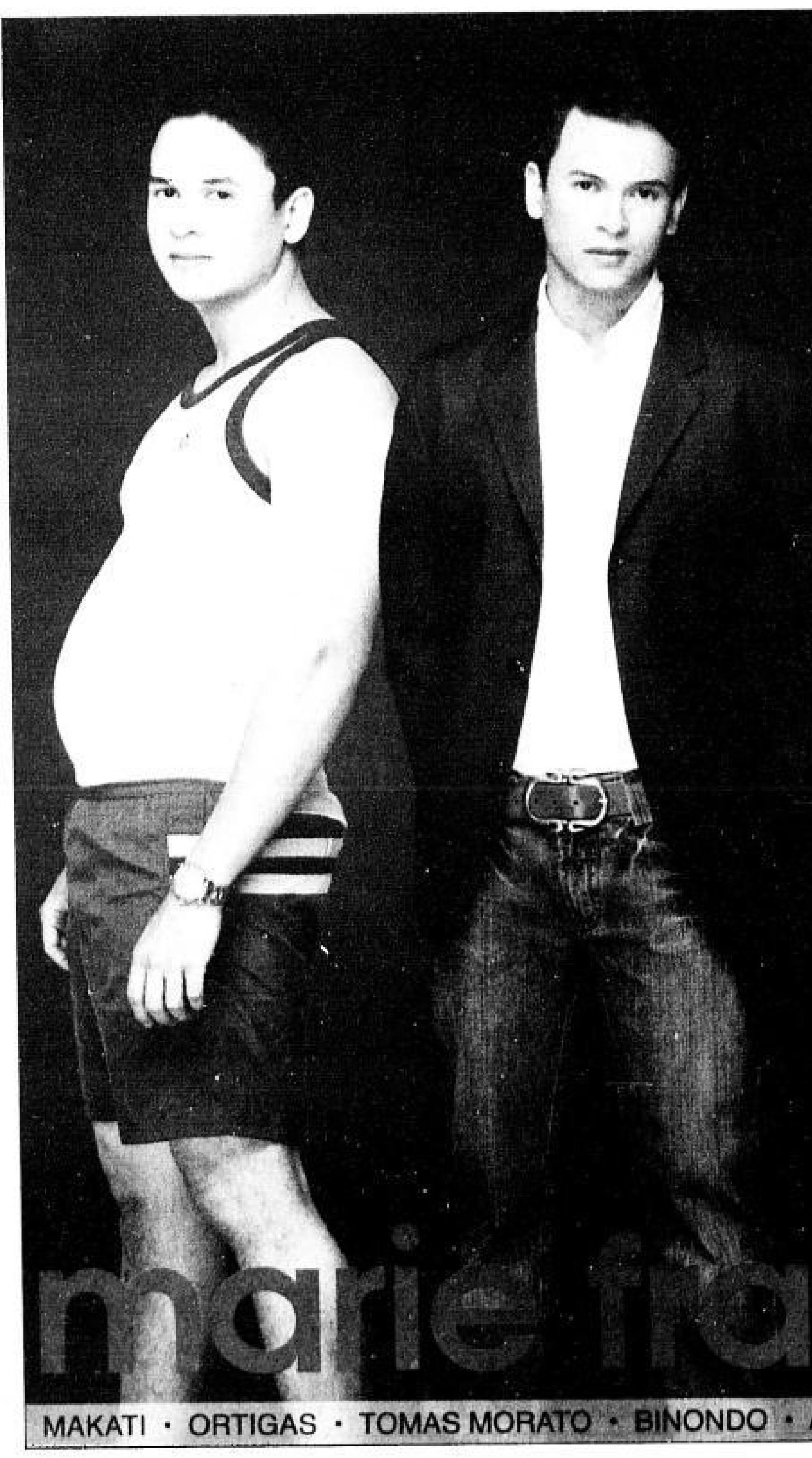
There aren't real expectations for the sequel, "Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer," also directed by Tim Story.

But older comics readers are probably a little excited to see the debut of an iconic Marvel character, the space-traversing alien Norrin Radd, a.k.a. the Silver Surfer. For some people, having Chris Evans and Jessica Alba in the popcorn flick is reason enough to watch.

They may be right. Aside from the dandy special effects used on the Surfer, eye candy hotties Evans (as the beloved jock Human Torch) and Alba (as Torch's sister Invisible Woman) are two of the movie's mesmerizing elements.

That's great, because the Thing's rock skin effects on actor Michael Chiklis still

SHINY/ D2



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12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 WILDERNESS
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

5 NEXT
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

6 ANGELS
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

7 OCEAN'S 13
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

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5 OCEAN'S 13 12:30 3:15
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5 ANGELS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 RESERVED
8 BORDERTOWN

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3 CONDEMNED
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Sunshine: Let …

From page D1

Boy's 'toy'

Portal Innovations Corporation has launched LoadXtreme. **Boy Abunda**, a LoadXtreme dealer himself, hosted the event.

My fave talk show host is also a biz genius. The retailing program works like a one-stop store. Only, there's no need for an actual store. Using an existing SIM, anyone can start a loading business instantly with his cell phone.

PIC president and CEO **Ismael M. Bengco** said they offer new collateral, a package, which as Boy says, dealer kit *pa lang, mae*-excite *ka na.*"

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Reader's corner

Hi, Dolly.

I'm the co-producer of the soundtrack album of "Angels." I would like to comment on your item about **Louie Heredia**'s reaction to the movie's theme, "For The Rest Of My Life." As album producers, we are accountable only to the composer of the song, who happens to be **Jimmy Borja**. So we gave him proper credit.

Thanks.
Mario Colmenares

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

Shiny …

From page D1

look horrendously goopy. They should've found a way to make him look cool, not like a B-movie reject.

The team isn't the typical pathos-anchored superheroes; they're popular celebs, led by the uber-stretchy Mr. Fantastic (Ioan Gruffudd). They have adjusted to their unearthly powers. Even the Thing has a sunnier outlook, and is now dating the devoted Alicia Masters (Kerry Washington).

Development

There's marked-character development and creative use of powers in enough scenes, though some of them are painful to watch (Mr. Fantastic's dance scene!) But the fun and games are short-lived.

The Surfer's cool despite the very limited information on his character. He's motion-acted by Doug Jones (who previously appeared as the fairy-munching monster in "Pan's Labyrinth"). Laurence Fishbourne supplies his majestic voice.

Naughty humor

"Rise of the Silver Surfer" is more fun and has more mindless action scenes than its predecessor. There's naughty humor worked into a few lines and scenes as well, and they mostly work, thankfully. But ultimately, it becomes inconsequential, junk food-like, and quite frankly, forgettable.

Montage of images on our TV screens

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE CONGRATULATE HOMEBOY **BILLY Crawford**, who's making a comeback, for deciding to break away from his European performing career and focusing now on local entertainment. He's learned a lot from performing abroad, so it's good that he's sharing his expertise with performers here.

Currently, he's focusing on spearheading a GMA-7 tilt for new hip-hop dancers, whose potential is being further developed by a dance teacher from France. We caught a telecast of the ongoing tilt recently, and we found the young finalists' display of talent quite bracing.

But we hope that the finalists will also be encouraged to do difficult solo pieces, where they can show what they're really capable of.

As for Billy, we trust that he has more on his plate than this current search for hip-hop dancers. Our hope is that he can also act in a film that can take local musical productions to a new level.

•Another eye-catching image on local TV screens was provided by **Rufa Mae Quinto**, whose sexier figure was recently displayed in a bikini pictorial on the tube. A cautionary note, however: The beauty of Rufa Mae's body has been enhanced by her weight loss, but her face hasn't. She looks older and less fresh and saucy than she used to, and that's a pity because she's still too young to look *that* mature.

•Here's an example of how a news program's field reporter should *not* cover a news event: The lady reporter wore a lot of jewelry (earrings, rings, bracelet, necklace) and looked all dolled up as she interviewed a policeman, and then some witnesses, about a crime. Shouldn't field reporters make it a point to dress *down* instead of up?

•Finally, a note on the Little Miss Philippines kiddie personality and talent portion that's recently been revived on "Eat Bulaga": We like the fact that the moppets aren't being overdressed to look like princesses, and that their make-up is light.

This sustains their natural kiddie charm, unlike other talent searches on TV that make their child contestants look like little Japayukis.

The day we watched the Little Ms Philippines portion, there was a pretty contestant and another girl who didn't look as good, but was a great, entertaining talker. We hoped that a tie would be declared, but no, the pretty girl won.

We wish that the people behind the tilt can think out of the "pretty" box and give more points to good talkers. They aren't that easy to find these days, and they could enjoy more prosperous and longer-running show biz careers (think **Aiza Seguerra**).

Speaking of Aiza, it looks like she'll be coming on strong in her latest *teleserye*, "Ysabella" (top-billing **Judy Ann Santos**), where she acts up a colorful storm as a tattooed tomboy!

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

NEXT PG13 1:50,4:05,6:20,8:35	NEXT PG13 1:25,3:40,5:55, 8:10,10:30	THE INVISIBLES PG13 1:20,3:35,5:50, 8:05,10:20
FANTASTIC FOUR: Rise of the Silver Surfer G 2:30,4:40,6:50,9:00	OCEAN'S THIRTEEN PG13 3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00	FANTASTIC FOUR: Rise of the Silver Surfer G 1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Araneta Center
araneta center.net

Gateway Ali MALL Farmers Plaza
gatewaymall.com.ph

Gateway CINEPLEX*10
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FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 10:00
THE INVISIBLE 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
WILDERNESS 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:40
ANGELS 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
NEXT 1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50
OCEAN'S 13 1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50
PAANO KITA IIBIGIN 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 12:05 / 3:20 / 6:35 / 9:50
FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00

DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
PLATINUM CINEMA

Ali MALL 5

1 NEXT 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:45
2 THE INVISIBLE 1:15 / 3:45 / 6:15 / 8:45
3 FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
4 ANGELS 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20
5 WILDERNESS 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM
www.aranetacoliseum.com

June 27 -Wed PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
4:35 Alaska vs San Miguel 7:20 Red Bull vs Talk N Text

PINOY BIG BROTHER
SEASON 2 BIG NIGHT
June 30, Saturday 9:30 pm

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 FANTASTIC FOUR - RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER (GP) 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30
2 NEXT MTRCB PG-13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
3 EIGA SAI MTRCB PG-13 2:00, 5:00, 8:00
4 INVISIBLE MTRCB PG-13 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
FANTASTIC FOUR RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER (GP) 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

"EIGA SAI 2007 JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY FILMS"
June 26 (Tuesday)
Shangri-la (PG-13) - 2:00PM / Stars Converge (PG-13) - 5:00PM
Harmful Insect (PG-13) - 8:00PM

Tickets to "TRANSFORMERS" now available!
Showing on June 28, 2007 (Thursday)

8th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

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THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
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CINEMA 1 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:40 , 2:00 , 4:20 6:40 , 9:00 GP
CINEMA 2 THE INVISIBLE 12:15 , 2:50 , 5:20 7:50 , 10:20 PG-13
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 NEXT 12:15 , 2:25 , 4:35 6:45 , 9:00 PG-13
CINEMA 4 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:30 , 2:50 , 5:10 7:30 , 9:50 GP
CINEMA 5 FANTASTIC FOUR 10:45 , 1:10 , 3:30 5:50 , 8:10 , 10:30 GP

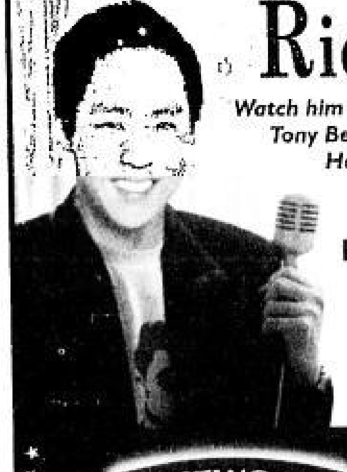
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	August 24 & 25 , 2007	Ogie Alcasid & Regine Velasquez	8:00 PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	June 29 July 06 , 13 , 20 & 27 August 8-9 , 15-16 , 22-23 , 29-30	Drag - Ons Cerrudo Classico Classic	10:00 PM 8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

Eastwood City
presents

Richard Poon



Watch him bring back the classics, with hits from Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra, Rod Stewart, Harry Connick, Jr. and more...

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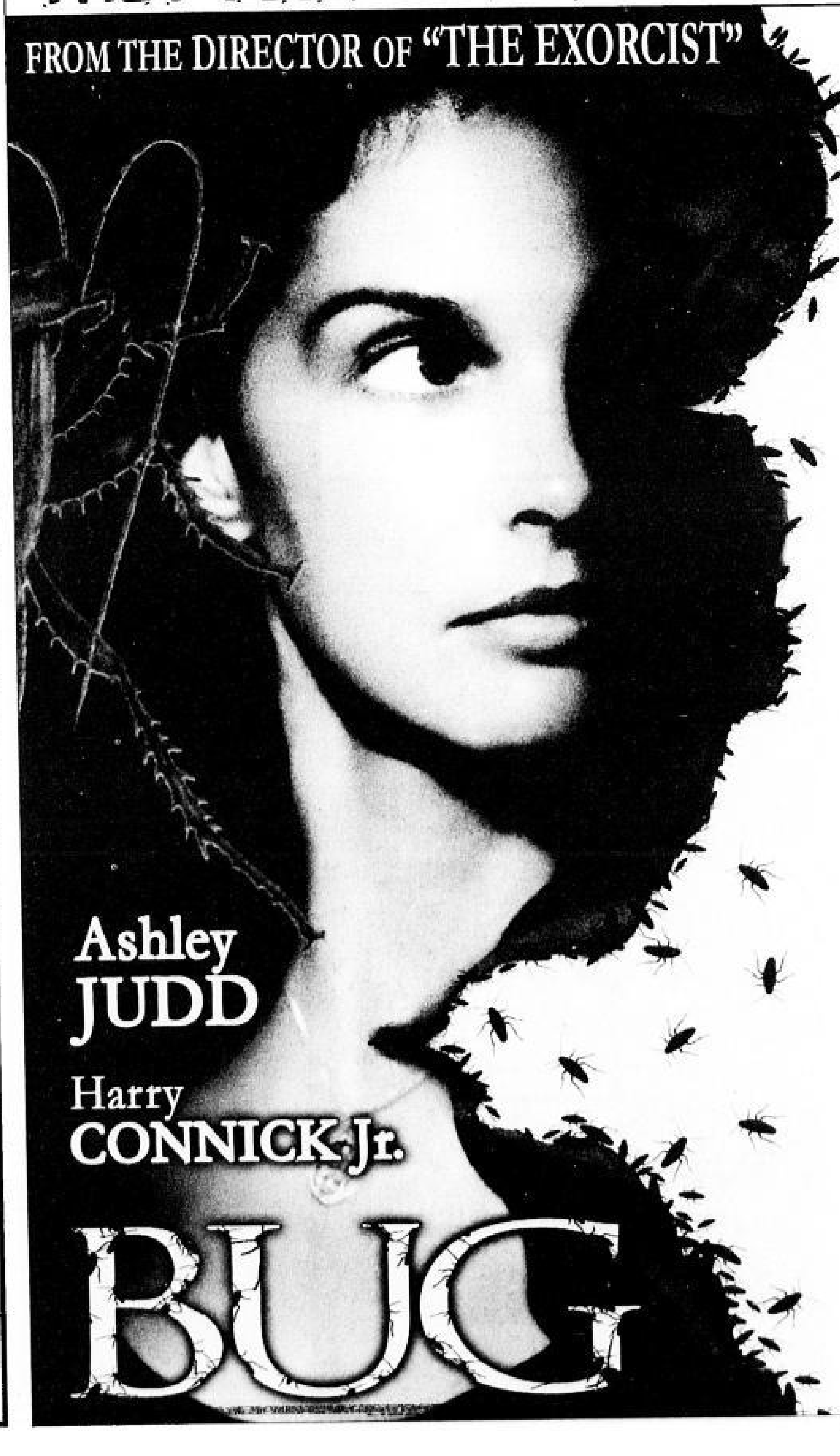
on June 28-30, 2007
FOR INQUIRIES CALL
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 NEXT 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30 PG-13
2 FANTASTIC 4 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10 G
3 FANTASTIC 4 1:20, 3:40, 6:00 8:20, 10:50 G
4 INVISIBLE 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 PG-13

OPENS TOMORROW

THEY LIVE IN YOUR BLOOD
THEY FEED ON YOUR BRAIN

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE EXORCIST"



MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th Floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.1227 / 6337851 loc. 171
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (DOLBY) NEXT
3 (DOLBY) EGAI SAI
4 (DOLBY) INVISIBLE
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) INVISIBLE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 INVISIBLE
3 ANGELS
4 NEXT

starmall EDSA SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ANGELS
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604285, 5433994
1 ANGELS
2 NEXT
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 INVISIBLE

THEATRES
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 ZODIAC
3 ANGELS

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 ANGELS
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest
FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DOLBY) WILDERNESS
2 (SDDS) INVISIBLE
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (GOLD DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
5 GOLD (DOLBY) NEXT
6 GOLD (SDDS) OCEAN'S THIRTEEN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
8 (DOLBY) PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
9 (DOLBY) ANGELS
10 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (DOLBY) FRACTURE
3 (DOLBY) INVISIBLE
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 INVISBLE
3 ANGELS
4 NEXT
5 SILIP

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 BORDERTOWN
4 SILIP

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 WILDDERNESS

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 28 WEEKS LATER

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS EX) ZODIAC
4 INVISBLE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 SHOOTER

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6063 or 72
1 (DOLBY) NEXT
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) INVISBLE

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 SILIP
2 (DTS) INVISBLE
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 (DOLBY) RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 SILIP
2 28 WEEKS LATER / SUNSHINE
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 LUCKY YOU
2 ANGELS
3 (DOLBY) MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 OCEAN'S THIRTEEN
2 SILIP
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 SILIP
2 FANTASTIC FOUR

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 PREMONITION
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) FRACTURE
2 BOLD STAR
3 SILIP
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) INVISIBLE
2 SILIP
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 FRACTURE
5 28 WEEKS LATER

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 OCEAN'S THIRTEEN
3 ANGELS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 OBSESSION
2 AKO IKAW SIYA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Now On Disc

'Matira Matibay'

A COMPILATION of Parokya ni Edgar's best-loved singles titled "Matira Matibay, PG 13 (Parokya's Greatest 1994-2007)" has been released by Universal Records in three formats—CD, VCD and DVD.

All three formats contain 19 songs—"Buloy," "Maniwala Ka Sana," "Silvertoes," "Harana," "Picha Pie," "Halaga," "Inuman Na," "Swimming Beach," "Sorry Na," "Mr. Suave," "The Yes Yes Show," "Mang Jose," "Chikinini," "First Day Funk," "Para Sa 'Yo," "Bagsakan," "Papa Cologne," "The Ordertaker" and "Gitara."

The DVD edition of "Matira Matibay" contains the exclusive "Bagsakan" music video never seen on TV.

'Flags'/ 'Iwo Jima'

CLINT Eastwood's epic World War II dramas, "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Letters from Iwo Jima" are now on DVD—in special editions that include special features like "The Making of An Epic," an inside look at the film's creation; "Six Brave Men," on the film's soldier-protagonists; "Raising the Flag," on how the production reenacted the historic flag-raising on Iwo Jima; and "Looking at the Past," on the battle and bond tour, using historical footage and news reels.

it's a
boygirl
thing
VCD P275
DVD P375

'Boy Girl Thing'

THE MOVIE "It's A Boy Girl Thing" is about next-door-neighbors who live worlds apart.

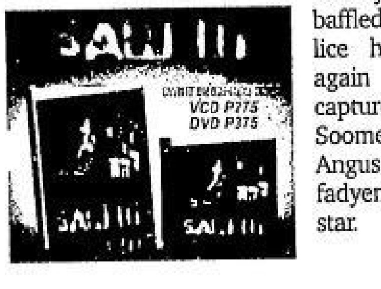
Nell Bedworth (Samaire Armstrong) and Woody Deane (Kevin Zegers) are sworn enemies who wake up one morning in a very strange place: each other's body.

The romantic comedy is now available on DVD for P375 and VCD for P275.

'Saw III'

THE PSYCHOPATHIC killer turns an abandoned warehouse on the edge of town into a gruesome torture chamber in this third installment of the horror series.

With his new apprentice Amanda (Shawnee Smith), the puppet-master behind the cruel games that have terrified the community and baffled the police has once again eluded capture. Bahar Soomekh and Angus Macfadyen also star.



'Giant of the Skies,' old movie and 'Oprah'

DISCOVERY CHANNEL'S "GIANT OF THE Skies" follows the Airbus A380, the world's largest passenger plane, from conception, construction, its 17-day test flight in November 2006 and the final tests in a five-part series starting today until June 29 at 12 a.m.

The first episode follows the people behind the race to build the enormous wings, fuselages and other oversize parts for the machine.

From giant factories in the UK, Germany, France and Spain, each gigantic component must make a journey over thousands of miles, traveling by road, river and sea to the Final Assembly Line in Toulouse.

CLICK!

JAMIE OLIVER

SHERYL Crow guests on "Oprah"

Oprah episodes

"Oprah Primetime Specials," showing every Sunday, 8 p.m. on Hallmark Channel, gathers the brightest stars in an hour of conversation with the Queen of Talk.

On July 1, the cast of the comedy "Wild Hogs"—John Travolta, Tim Allen, Martin Lawrence and William H. Macy—discuss the fun project and give viewers a sneak peek on their latest firsts in their personal lives.

On July 8, screen legend Ellen Burstyn talks about the spiritual journey that convinced her to face the ghosts from her past while rocker Sheryl Crow shares how she overcame her called-off engagement to cyclist Lance Armstrong and her battle against cancer.

Madonna tells her side on the adoption controversy and Dixie Chicks speak out on the life after the boycotts and death threats caused by a bold political comment on July 15.

Period film

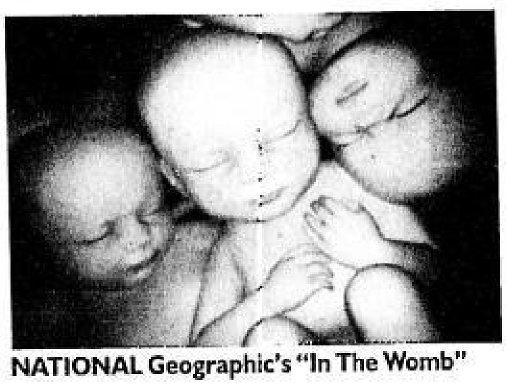
"Man in the Moon," a heartwarming coming-of-age film set in the 1950s, stars Reese Witherspoon as a 14-year-old girl who gets her first difficult lesson in love.

Also starring Bentley Mitchum, Ernie Lively, Dennis Letts, Sam Waterston, Tess Harper and Gail Strickland, the Robert Mulligan film is MGM Channel's July 2 feature at 9 p.m.

Home cooking

From July 5, 8 to 8:30 p.m., half-hour episodes of the brand new series "Jamie at Home" will air every Thursday on Discovery Travel & Living. Episodes encore the following Monday at 10 p.m.

Each episode features Jamie Oliver cooking with one primary ingredient. It could be a look at all the different varieties of tomatoes, what one can do with potatoes, or how to cook different cuts of lamb.



NATIONAL Geographic's "In The Womb"

Three of a kind

In National Geographic Channel's "In the Womb: Twins, Triplets, and Quads," groundbreaking technology takes viewers into the world of extraordinary sets of fetuses as they develop inside the womb.

The special follows the stories of three expectant mothers from conception to birth and travels inside the womb to see the tiny fetuses begin to interact with each other—pushing, kicking and even what looks like playing and kissing.

The episode premieres today at 1 a.m., June 28 at 9 p.m. and June 29 at 1 a.m., only on the National Geographic Channel.

THEIR WAR. OUR WORLD.
CHOOSE YOUR SIDE
MTRCB RATING G FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE
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A MICHAEL BAY FILM
DESTROY
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DreamWorks Pictures
United International Pictures
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AT THE CINEMAS
THX
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE INVISIBLE	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 ANGELS
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 NEXT	2 THE INVISIBLE	3 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 ANGELS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	6 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	7 OCEAN'S 13
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 NEXT	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 OCEAN'S 13 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE INVISIBLE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 NEXT GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER		
	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 OCEAN'S 13	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 THE CONDEMNED	4 ZODIAC
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER		
	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 ANGELS	

Ayala CINEMAS
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JUNE 28, 2007
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER
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GREENBELT
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Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
BPI Express Credit Installment Madness June 13 to July 1, 2007	Ansons Emporium Exhibit June 11 to 28, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Mitsubishi Car Display June 28 to 30 at Paseos	Ballet & Arts Centre at 3/F near Hallway of Blims Registration period is fr June 15 - 30. Classes starts July 3

GREENBELT
European Film Festival at the Parl
June 21 & 28, 2007 @ GB 3 Park

Greenbelt Onstage
ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007
For bookings, pls. call 752-7862 or 757-3861

Ayala MUSEUM
Embroidered Mutliples: 18th - 19th Century Philippine Costume fr. The Museum Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnology), The Netherlands June 4 to July 1, 2007
For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

SONY BMG
MALL SHOWS

Catch today's hottest bands as they perform their latest hits.

TriNoma · June 15
6 Cyclemind
"Home"
Activity Center, 6pm

Market! Market! · June 22
Cueshé
"Back To Me"
Activity Center, 5pm

Pavilion Mall · June 30
Craeons
"Non-Toxic"
Bridgeway, 5pm

SONY BMG
MARKET! MARKET!
TriNoma
PAVILION mall
Managed by Ayala Malls